

May 26, 2021

To: School Administrators

From: Kerry Donnell, Communications & Privacy Manager

Re: Mass COVID-19 vaccination clinics in Belleville and Bancroft for youth ages 12-17

Background

Infection prevention protocols, paired with the ongoing vigilance and dedication of staff, have helped keep the risk of COVID-19 spread within the school setting low in our region. Ensuring school staff and eligible students have the opportunity to get vaccinated will add to current measures to prevent spread of COVID-19.

Current situation

Youth aged 12 and over are now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination in Ontario.

- Locally, in order to ensure eligible youth have access to vaccines as soon as possible, HPE Public Health (HPEPH) will be holding special youth vaccination clinics during the weeks of May 31 and June 7.
- Clinics will be offered in Belleville and Bancroft and are open to all eligible youth attending school in Hastings County and Prince Edward County. These clinics will offer the Pfizer vaccine, which is currently the only COVID-19 vaccine that has been authorized by Health Canada for use in individuals aged 12 and over.

WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR OTHER CONCERNS?

Our partners at HPEPH recognize that it may be challenging for some students to attend the Belleville and Bancroft clinics. HPEPH will monitor vaccine uptake at each local school. If the data shows that certain communities are experiencing barriers accessing vaccines, HPEPH will consider additional approaches to reach these groups.

PLEASE NOTE: Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is a personal choice. It is important to recognize that students and families may have strong personal feelings in favour of, or in opposition to, vaccines.

For reference, the following public health resources are available to help youth and families make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccination:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine for Youth – FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Youth](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Consent form for Youth](#)

Additional information about vaccine safety, potential side effects and building immunity is available at covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-youth.

Action required

1. Our partners at public health are asking for as much awareness about the clinics as possible. Please [share the letter for families](#) with staff, as well as with students and families of youth in the 12-17 age group, through your usual school-home communication channels.
2. Later today, a central broadcast message and email with the letter for families will be sent to families of students in the 12-17 age group to advise of the mass vaccination clinics.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work together to keep students, classrooms, and colleagues as safe as possible throughout the pandemic.