

## NEWS RELEASE — ONTARIO — APRIL 28-29, 2024

Ontario News — Ontario is introducing the most comprehensive plan in Canada to reduce distractions in classrooms and improve the health of children by standardizing and strengthening province-wide measures and mandatory learning to directly counter the alarming rise of vaping and cellphone distractions within classrooms.

“We have heard loud and clear from parents and teachers alike that cellphones in classrooms are distracting kids from learning,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. “Our government is introducing the toughest policy in Canada to tackle this issue by cracking down on cellphone usage during class time, as well as banning vaping in all schools. When it comes to cellphones, our policy is ‘out of sight and out of mind,’ as we get students back to the basics by restoring focus, safety and common sense back in Ontario schools.”

Students in kindergarten to Grade 6 will be required to keep phones on silent and out of sight for the entire school day, unless explicitly permitted by an educator. For students in Grades 7 to 12, cellphones will not be permitted during class time unless explicitly directed by the educator. Moreover, social media websites will be removed from all school networks and devices, and report cards will include comment on students’ distraction levels in class. The government will provide mandatory training for teachers and new supports for students and parents. (Ontario News, April 28, 2024. Available at [NewsOntario.ca](https://newsontario.ca) )

Toronto Star — There will be new mandatory reporting to parents if kids are caught vaping or smoking as well as mandatory confiscation of any products. Lecce said the government also plans to put vape detectors in washrooms. The changes will include training for teachers, new signage in schools and support for kids and parents, including an awareness campaign, Lecce said. “We need consistency. We need rigour in our schools. And we need to restore safety. Too many kids can’t focus because of the distractions in schools.” (Toronto Star, April 29, 2024. Available at [TorontoStar.ca](https://torontostar.ca) )