

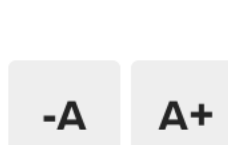
EDUCATION

Montreal high school teachers full of questions about the resumption of classes

BY DAN SPECTOR · GLOBAL NEWS
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— WATCH: As of May 4, the province's high school teachers will be asked to report back to work. While students will not be returning to class, the teachers are being asked to go back to empty classrooms and as Global's Dan Spector explains, the teachers say their roles are still unclear.



There are still plenty of questions around the planned re-opening of Quebec schools over the next few weeks.

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While elementary schools are trying to get organized to welcome students back, high school teachers are trying to figure out how to finish the year.

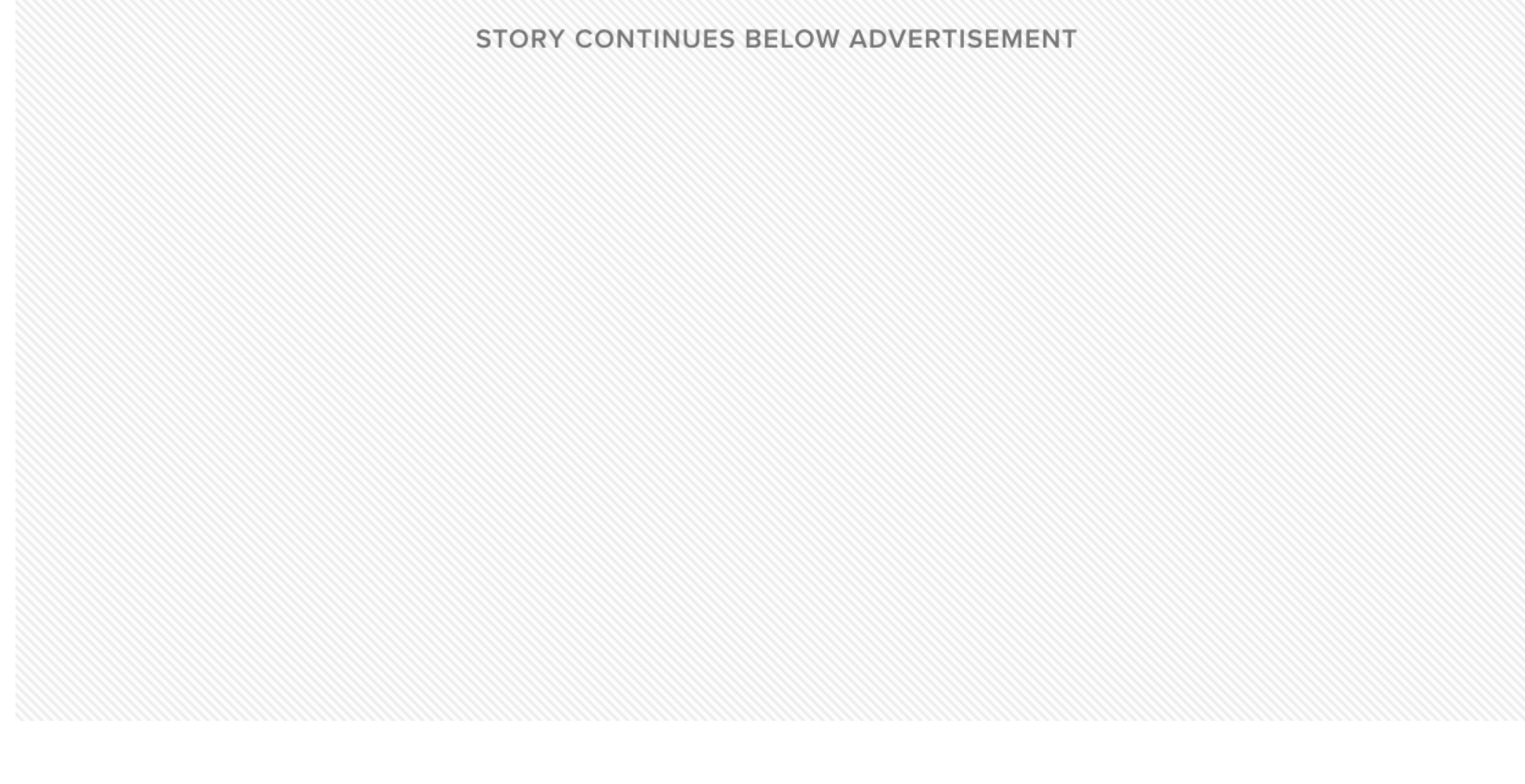
Quebec unions, parents raise concerns over back-to-school plan amid coronavirus crisis

"Quebec is the first province in Canada to open school in spite of the fact we have the most cases, 43 U.S. states are only opening schools in September. What is the rush? Why are we doing this here?" wonders Robert Green, a teacher at Westmount High School.

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When asked if schools were reopening pre-maturely on Thursday, Premier Francois Legault said, "I don't think so," adding that there are risks, but things are under control in regions outside Montreal and children are less susceptible to serious COVID-19 symptoms.

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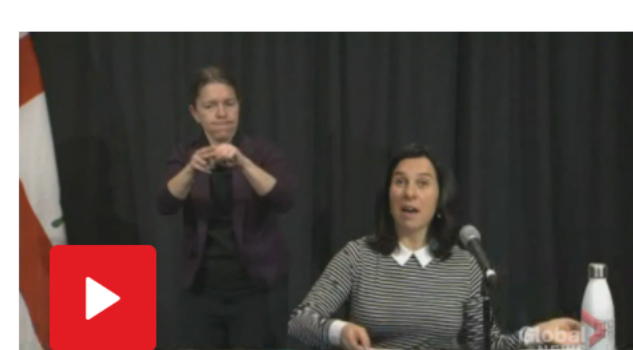


Legault said he won't hesitate to push dates back if necessary, but elementary schools are supposed to open May 19th in Montreal, and May 11th outside the city.

The province said high schools would not open their buildings to students at all until fall, yet teachers at both the English Montreal and Lester B. Pearson School Boards say they were initially told they'd going back to their empty classrooms on Monday, May 4th.



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"We were even told if we have staff meetings, this will be by Zoom. So teachers would be sitting in different parts of the building, isolated, having a meeting on Zoom. There is nothing about what they said we need to do that can't be done at home," Green said.

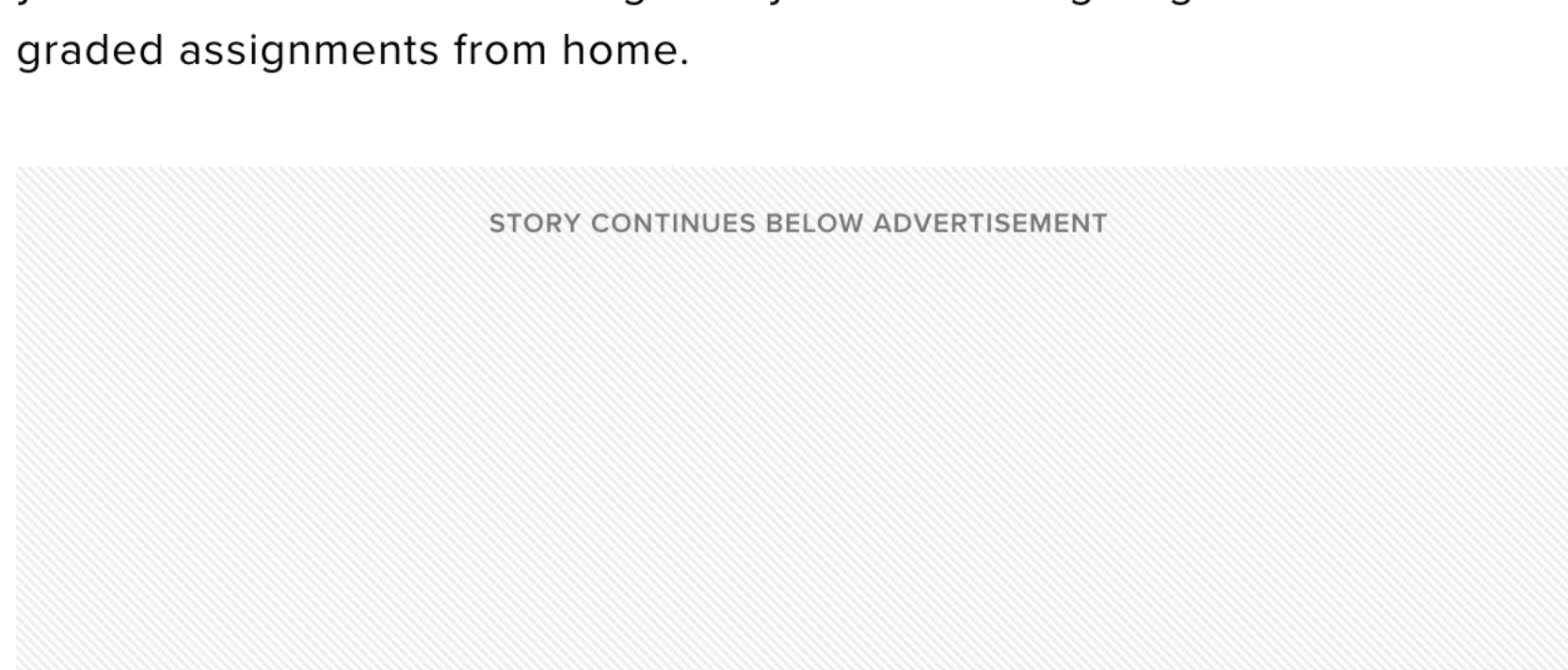
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After outrage from teachers, both boards reversed the requirement on Thursday.

"This morning we received updated information that high school teachers would not be returning to our buildings as of Monday," explained Catherine Hogan, a teacher at Westwood High School in the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

Quebec Education Minister Jean-Francois Roberge said it's up to principals of individual schools to decide who must come in to buildings, or work remotely.

The government directive sent to schools this week said "although secondary schools will remain closed, secondary school students must be able to finish acquiring essential knowledge by the end of the school year." Teachers are wondering if they will soon be giving exams and graded assignments from home.



"If the minister is saying these kids can make up some of the work and be graded for it, we'd like to know if we're doing term three report cards. Is it mandatory for students to submit work across all students, or only those in

The Education Ministry did not answer a question about students doing graded assignments from a distance when asked by Global News on Thursday.

Hogan also said Westwood was trying to work out a plan to allow students to come to the school to pick up books and personal belongings in their lockers.

"What our principal would like to do is have a small group of volunteer teachers who would come in and put the materials from kids lockers in bags, put names on bags, and then set everything out, and students can simply remove their articles," she said.

Schools are also seeking information on how well-equipped students are at home technologically for distance learning.

"That's part of the work being done in next week or two to determine all that's needed," said English Montreal School Board spokesperson Mike Cohen.

High school teachers are hoping for far more clarity in the coming days.

Canadian cases

CONFIRMED	DEATHS	RECOVERED
53,657	3,223	22,057
(Today: +432)	(Today: +39)	(Today: +620)

852,936 tests administered (Today: +16,532)

Updates may take up to 10 minutes to appear in the table.

Last Updated: EDT

Sources: [How we get the data](#)

