

**Queen's Park**  
Room 359, Main Legislative Building  
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON, M7A 1A5  
Tel: 416-325-6908 | Fax: 416-325-7030  
email: psattler-qp@ndp.on.ca



**Constituency Office**  
240 Commissioners Rd W, Unit 106  
London, ON, N6J 1Y1  
Tel: 519-657-3120 | Fax: 519-657-0368  
email: psattler-co@ndp.on.ca

**Peggy Sattler MPP**  
London West

Hon. Stephen Lecce  
Minister of Education  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 438 University Ave  
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

May 10, 2021

Dear Minister Lecce,

I am writing to highlight ongoing concerns that have been brought to my attention by London West parents regarding the Support for Families, Support for Learners, and now COVID-19 Child Benefit programs.

Many families have contacted my office to express their frustration that they were unaware of these programs until it was too late to apply. I understand that information was posted through social media channels, but parents were not contacted directly about these benefits and the timelines for application were very short. Several parents told me they only learned about the earlier programs when they applied for the COVID-19 Child Benefit. Families who had errors with their Support for Families or Support for Learners applications were not informed of the errors until it was too late to resubmit. Families who did not receive payments for one or more of their children only learned that there were technical issues with their online submissions after the application deadlines had passed.

Minister, I am urging you to allow families to apply retroactively for the Support for Families and the Support for Learners programs. It has been an incredibly difficult and stressful year for families in London and across the province. Many parents, and women in particular, have struggled to balance working at home while caring for children and supporting students through remote learning. Some have faced the financial challenges of job loss or loss of income because of reduced work hours. Those who are essential workers have lived with the burden of fear and anxiety that they will bring COVID-19 home to their families. Parents should not be punished for being focused on other priorities during this prolonged period of crisis, and for missing information about new benefits while being inundated with government announcements. Your government's decision to implement these programs should be accompanied by a commitment to make them as accessible as possible, so that all families who are eligible for the payments receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy Sattler".

Peggy Sattler, MPP  
London West

cc. MPP Marit Stiles, Ontario NDP Education Critic