

FAQ

COVID-19 Health and Safety Measures in Schools for 2022-2023

The 2022/23 school year health and safety measure requirements will remain unchanged from the previous directions provided by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and from the Peel and Wellington-Dufferin Public Health at the end of 2021/22 school year.

See below questions related to COVID-19 for your guidance.

1. Will schools still track absence rates in schools and when will/how often will they be reported to Peel Public Health?

Yes, as required by the Ministry of Education, schools will continue to track absence rates and communicate information with our regional public health units when these rates increase above 30 % of the schools baseline. Reporting to the Go Secure account daily is no longer required.

2. Will communication letters be sent out to staff and the community should a school report greater than 30% absenteeism?

Upon PPH investigation and determination, that the high absenteeism is related to COVID-19, a notification letter will be provided by PPH to the schools to be sent to staff and the community.

3. Are staff and student required to disclosed if they have contracted COVID-19 or its Variants?

No, there is no Ministry/Provincial/PPH requirement to report any cases to PPH, only the >30% absenteeism.

4. If a parent discloses/confirms that their student has contracted COVID-19 will a letter be sent out to the families in that classroom?

Yes, Dufferin-Peel will continue to be transparent as it relates to COVID-19 cases, where principals will be required to provide a notification letter to staff and students in that classroom.

5. Is mask required to be worn in schools?

No, wearing a mask is OPTIONAL. It is strongly encouraged that schools are to actively promote respectful and inclusive environments for individual who chooses to wear, or not wear a mask in the school community.

6. Will masks be available for students and staff who choose to wear it?

Yes, masks (medical grade and N95 and other PPE) will be available for staff and non-medical mask only available for students at all DPCDSB schools.

7. Will the government continue to provide high-quality masks and personal Protective equipment (PPE) to student and staff?

Yes, optional PPE for students and staff will be provided through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery (formerly the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services).

8. Will Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) still be available?

Yes, the Ministry will continue to offer access to rapid antigen tests for students and staff, in alignment with provincial testing guidance. The Rapid antigen tests are to be provided to staff/students **upon their request**, and/or **upon return from an unplanned absence**. Schools may need to re-kit the RAT boxes into smaller quantities for distribution (i.e., boxes containing 10 rapid antigen tests could be re-kitted into two packages of 5 rapid antigen tests).

9. Will hand sanitizer be available and will enhanced cleaning routines continue?

Yes, hand sanitizer will continue to be available throughout all schools and will be provided by the Ministry. Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should continue to be promoted and integrated throughout the school day. Enhanced cleaning protocols will continue, with daily cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces

10. Does self-screening still have to take place?

Yes, it is recommended that staff, students and visitors continue to self-screen every day before attending school using either the COVID-19 school and childcare screening tool. Following public health guidance, individuals should stay home if they are feeling ill to prevent the spread of illness.

11. Are water fountains going to be open in addition to water filling stations?

Yes, there are no longer any restriction on the use of the water fountain. It is encouraged however, to use fountains to fill a cup/bottle from which to drink.

12. When a student comes to school coughing, what does the school do?

PPH has confirmed that families and student should utilize the self-screening tool prior to coming to school and follow the appropriate guidance given. Should the student develop a cough during school hours however, administrators are to follow the Boards policy and procedures related to ill children during school hours.

13. If a family member at home has COVID-19 symptoms, can the student still come to school?

It depends on the specific circumstances as noted in the school screening tool.

14. What if the principals become aware of a student or staff in school having close contact with a family member who has COVID-19?

Remind staff, students and parents of the following: Refer to the chart below.

Household and Non-Household Close Contacts	<p>For a total of 10 days after the last exposure to the COVID-19 positive case or individual with COVID-19 symptoms, the individual notified by a case should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-monitor for symptoms. They should self-isolate immediately if they develop any symptom of COVID-19 and seek testing if eligible. • Individuals should maintain masking as much as possible in public settings (including school and childcare, unless under 2 years old). Reasonable exceptions would include removal for essential activities like eating, while maintaining as much distancing as possible. • Participation in activities where masking can be maintained throughout may be resumed, but individuals should avoid activities where mask removal would be necessary (e.g playing a wind instrument; high contact sports where masks cannot be safely worn); and, • Individuals who are unable to mask (e.g., children under two years of age, etc.) may return to public settings without masking.
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15. How will schools order/obtain PPE?

Communication around the availability of masks to all students and staff will be done prior to the start of the school year.

16. Should I have any questions related to COVID-19 who should I contact?

You can contact the Boards COVID-19 Lead Jessica Fearing, Manager of Health, and Safety for any COVID-19 related questions.