



August 26, 2020

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON MANDATORY MASKS FOR STUDENTS AND STAGGERED RETURN TO SCHOOL

### MASKS



When the Ontario Ministry of Education released its' *Approach to Reopening Schools for 2020 – 2021 School Year*, the *Guidance Document* indicated that students in Grades 4 to 12 would be required to wear cloth masks, and all educators would be required to wear a medical grade mask and would be provided with face shields.

On August 19, Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO of the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Unit, released a letter to Guelph residents identifying that during a meeting with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB), Upper Grand District School Board, and Wellington Catholic District School Board staff, she "advocated for the mandating of masks for students of Grade 1 to 3 and strongly encouraged them for students in Kindergarten." This letter is attached for reference.

Subsequently, Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer of Health for Peel Public Health, wrote a letter to the DPCDSB Board of Trustees on August 20 in which he recommended mandating masks for students in Grades 1 to 3 and strongly recommended the wearing masks by students in Kindergarten. This letter is also attached for reference.

Throughout the closure period, DPCDSB staff and the Board of Trustees have relied on guidance from the public health authorities regarding public health measures and health and safety protocols related to the operation of DPCDSB schools and other facilities. Accordingly, and in alignment with the recommendations from local public health authorities referenced above, Grades 1 to 12 students in the DPCDSB will be required to wear a cloth mask while travelling on DPCDSB transportation and at school. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that students in Kindergarten also wear masks. Some parents/guardians have asked about the use of a face shield as an alternative to a face mask. The public health unit has advised that face shields are intended to protect the eyes only. Parents are required to provide masks for their child(ren). Parents are strongly encouraged to provide their child(ren) with more than one mask daily in the event the mask becomes soiled or lost. It is also strongly recommended that parents provide their child(ren) with a storage bag for their mask while at school to keep the mask as clean as possible when removed to go outside. Should a student forget their mask, the school will have a limited quantity on hand. Questions regarding exemptions from the use of a mask are to be directed to the school principal and, in consultation with DPCDSB staff, will be provided on a case by case basis as related to individual student needs (i.e., developmental needs, diverse learning needs or health needs).

### STAGGERED RETURN TO SCHOOL: REMOTE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

DPCDSB staff has been working to analyze parent/guardian survey data regarding return to school intentions for students. Results indicate that, on average, 25% of students will access remote, synchronous and asynchronous learning and will not be physically returning to school at the start of the school year. Reorganization of the entire system is currently underway, including re-timetabling all secondary schools to reflect the number of students who will physically be in attendance and assigning elementary and secondary school students who have chosen remote learning to a "virtual school" with new



timetables and teachers, etc. This will require an extensive amount of coordination and organization and teachers will be reaching out to students throughout the first week of school to establish routines, schedules, and small group sessions when possible.

Further information for those students who are accessing remote learning will be provided via email communication to parents/guardians.

## STAGGERED RETURN TO SCHOOL: IN-PERSON PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE

As always, staff is committed to ensuring the safest return possible for students. In elementary and secondary schools, students will be staggered in their return to school so that all health and safety protocols can be rehearsed in smaller groups. During these days, in the first week of school, where smaller class groupings are attending, teachers will focus on topics such as:

- Entry and dismissal routines which respect physical distancing
- Movement in and around the school
- Transition times
- Expectations for masking and how to properly wear a mask and store the mask while outside
- Using the school washroom; handwashing and coughing/sneezing etiquette.
- Eating lunch/snacks, etc.
- Mental health and well-being check-ins and supports
- Diagnostic assessment to plan for intervention to learning gaps

Elementary students will attend for one day, based on local school organization and division of classes, during the first week of school. Grade 9 students will begin on the first day of school, based on cohort, for orientation to secondary school. Grades 10, 11 and 12 students will attend Thursday, September 10 (Cohort A) and Friday, September 11 (Cohort B).

The following chart identifies return to school dates for elementary and secondary students who will be physically returning to school or learning remotely:

ELEMENTARY IN-PERSON PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE	
WHO ATTENDS?	WHEN?
School staff only to rehearse health and safety protocols, set up learning management systems, learning resources and co-ordinate the use of space in the school and on the school yard.	Tuesday September 8
*Surname A-F of the School FDK – Grade 8 (to be communicated by school principal)	Wednesday September 9 Focus on Health and Safety protocols, student well-being and academic assessments
*Surname G-N of the School FDK – Grade 8 (to be communicated by school principal)	Thursday September 10 Focus on Health and Safety protocols, student well-being and academic assessments
*Surname O-Z of the School FDK – Grade 8 (to be communicated by school principal)	Friday September 11 Focus on Health and Safety protocols, student well-being and academic assessments
GROUP A Surname A to L, FDK to Grade 8	Monday September 14 Focus on Health and Safety Protocols within a larger group setting, student well-being and academic assessments

GROUP B Surname M-Z, FDK to Grade 8	Tuesday September 15 Focus on Health and Safety Protocols within a larger group setting, student well-being and academic assessments
All Students, FDK to Grade 8	Wednesday September 16
All Students, FDK to Grade 8	Thursday September 17
No students attend school – PA Day for Reorganization	Friday September 18
All students return to their classes	Monday September 21

Elementary students, therefore, would attend school one day the first week of school and three days the second week of school. All elementary students would physically attend each and every day starting the third week of school.

<b>SECONDARY PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE</b>	
<b>WHO ATTENDS?</b>	<b>WHEN?</b>
**Only Grade 9 Cohort A	Tuesday September 8 Focus on Well-Being and Health and Safety Protocols for students Orientation to secondary school
**Only Grade 9 Cohort B	Wednesday September 9 Focus on Well-Being and Health and Safety Protocols for students Orientation to secondary school
**Only Grades 10, 11 and 12 Cohort A	Thursday September 10 Focus on Well-Being and Health and Safety Protocols for students
**Only Grades 10, 11 and 12 Cohort B	Friday September 11 Focus on Well-Being and Health and Safety Protocols for students
** Only Grades 9, 10, 11, 12 Regular Schedule based on Cohorts	Monday September 14

<b>ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY VIRTUAL ONLINE</b>	
<b>WHO ATTENDS?</b>	<b>WHEN?</b>
All students	Class placement and coordination starting September 8 and throughout the week with focus on routines, expectations, etc.

A sample individual secondary school timetable for a Grade 9 student is provided below:

Sample Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 – 11:00	English Period 1 In school	Math Period 2 In school	English Period 1 In school  Alternating	English Period 1 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	Math Period 2 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support
11:00 – 12:00	Student Dismissal and Return to Home				
12:00 – 1:15	Math Period 2 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	English Period 1 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	Alternating by week Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	Math Period 2 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	English Period 1 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support
1:15 – 2:30	Math Period 2 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	English Period 1 Remote, synchronous and asynchronous Academic Support	Alternating by week Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	Math Period 2 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support	English Period 1 Remote, Synchronous and Asynchronous Academic Support

\*Elementary school principals will be providing parents/guardians with back to school protocols for the first day that a student returns to school (i.e., entry, dismissal, etc.). Each student will be emailed their child’s classroom number and teacher by end of day Tuesday, September 8.

\*\*Secondary school principals will be providing parents/guardians with back to school protocols for the first day that a student returns to school (i.e., entry, dismissal, etc.). Period 1 schedules and room numbers will be uploaded to students’ *MyBluePrint* accounts on Friday, September 4.

During the first week, secondary students who have elected for physical attendance, but are not attending class physically, will be working on classwork assigned by their teachers and accessing and setting up their learning management system and connecting with teachers.