

# BEGIN AGAIN

Plans for Reopening Schools in September 2020

BEGIN AGAIN  
DPCDSB SCHOOL  
REOPENING PLANS  
SEPTEMBER 2020



*"See, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5)*



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~Revelation 21:5

**(Last Updated:** August 24, 2020)

The following Return to School Plan is rooted in three key considerations:

- 1** Ensuring the safety of students and staff.
- 2** Adapting to Public Health/Ministry of Education direction regarding mode of Catholic teaching and learning.
- 3** Supporting student faith formation, well-being and achievement.

The operations outlined in this document are based on the most recent advice from Public Health officials. Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board's (DPCDSB) plans for re-opening schools are necessarily flexible and adaptive to meet the direction regarding school models in real time. The recommendations in this plan are subject to change, based on stakeholder feedback, the guidelines from the Ministry of Education, and current and updated information from Peel and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health on COVID-19 in our communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic creates uncertainty and disruption throughout our communities. DPCDSB strives to support our students' needs during this pandemic, while providing reasonable precautions to protect both students and staff from risk in our schools.

# 1

## Keeping students and staff safe.

Our Planning and Facilities Department have regularly maintained and inspected our schools despite being closed since March 13, 2020. All reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure a safe return to schools by students and staff.

### Self-Screening Procedures

All staff and students must self-screen every day before attending school. If a student or staff member is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, they must stay home from school and should seek testing and appropriate medical attention. Signs should be posted at entrances to the school to remind students, staff, parents/caregivers, and essential visitors of screening requirements.

It is not the staff's responsibility to screen students for illness. However, if a staff member is concerned that a student is exhibiting signs of illness, this will be reported to the school administration. If a student voluntarily shares that they, or a member of their family, has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test, this will also be shared with the school administrator. School administrators will advise their Family of Schools Supervisory Officer.

Parents are expected to screen their child(ren) daily for any symptoms of cold, flu, or other symptoms associated with COVID-19 using the [Self-Assessment tool](#) developed by the Province of Ontario. Parents will be informed that health care professionals are not located within our schools, so staff will not be screening students. However, if staff observe a child that is ill, parents/guardians will be called to pick up their child from the school promptly. Parents will be directed to check their child(ren) daily prior to boarding a school bus or going to school.

### Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 Symptoms

The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Public Health will work closely with school boards to monitor and respond to reports of COVID-19 symptoms.

Any student or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms while in school should be immediately separated from others, in a designated separate room where possible, until they are able to go home. They should not take student or public transportation. Isolated students should be supervised per usual school policy, with physical distancing maintained and PPE provided consistent with health guidance.

Staff with symptoms and parents/guardians of children with symptoms should be directed to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions. Persons who test positive may not return to school until they are cleared according to public health guidance. Persons who retest negative (after an initial positive test) can return to school once they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

Schools must ensure records of classes, including seating charts, bus cohorts, and daily records of any approved visitors to the school, including supply/occasional teachers, custodians, and maintenance staff, are maintained and readily available to be provided to public health for contact tracing purposes.

Schools must immediately report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school to the local public health unit and provide any materials (e.g., daily attendance and transportation records) to public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to the declaration of an outbreak and closure of classes and/or schools. School boards must report daily any suspected or confirmed cases within the school community to the ministry. An online reporting tool will be available for this purpose and no personal medical information will be collected by the ministry.

Principals must maintain a dedicated contact in the local public health unit and a list of the locations of the closest COVID-19 assessment sites.

If a student becomes ill during the day and/or if exhibits signs of illness, they will be required to enter into a separate room/area designated by the school until the parent can pick them up. The student will be provided with a disposable mask to wear until picked up, and staff assisting the student will be asked to wear a face shield in addition to a mask. The separate/isolation room area will then be closed until it can be deep cleaned and sanitized.

#### **Health Room (Isolation Room/Area)**

Each school will designate a separate room/isolation area. This room/area will be used for the temporary placement of any student or staff member that becomes ill during the day. An isolation kit containing staff/student PPE for illnesses, will be provided to each school containing: gloves, face masks for staff members, face shields or safety goggles, a box of tissues, hand sanitizer, disposable gown, board-approved disinfectant wipes and an IR thermometer. Administrators should designate a staff member with first aid training to monitor the room.

Peel or Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health will provide directions to the school Principal about what information to share with parents of other students in the class or school when there is confirmation of a positive COVID-19 result.

#### **Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

When a student or staff member has been diagnosed as positive for COVID-19, the school will follow the directions of Public Health. This may require one or multiple classes to move to a fully online learning model and/or may require the school to be closed to in-person instruction for a length of time, based on recommendations by Peel or Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health. *We are awaiting further direction from the Public Health authorities regarding confirmed cases of COVID-19 and how they are reported/communicated.*

Students who test positive for COVID-19 must provide proof of medical clearance before being allowed to return to in-person instruction.

Deep cleaning of all areas accessed by someone testing positive for COVID-19 will be undertaken using approved procedures and products.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

### ***Students***

Students in Grades 1 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical grade or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes. Outdoor times like recess can be used as opportunities to provide students with breaks from wearing masks within their cohorts.

While not required, it is strongly recommended that students in Kindergarten wear a non-medical grade or cloth mask.

Students are encouraged to practice wearing masks at home and learn what type of mask is most comfortable for them. Parents/guardians are expected to provide students with their own non-medical masks, however, schools will have a supply of non-medical masks available for students. Reasonable exceptions on the requirement to wear masks will apply.

### ***Teachers and Staff***

Medical grade masks and eye protection (i.e. face shield) will be provided for all teachers and other staff of school boards. All school-based staff will be required to wear masks, with reasonable exceptions for medical conditions.

School-based staff who are regularly in close contact with students will be provided with all appropriate PPE.

### ***Exceptions***

Reasonable exceptions to the requirement to wear masks are expected to be put in place by schools and school boards.

Staff or students with sensory or breathing difficulties may be exempted by the school principal, guided by school board guidelines.

### ***Supply of Masks and PPE***

Masks and other PPE have been sourced by the Ontario government. The ministry will work closely with school boards to confirm demand and facilitate timely delivery and supply. In classes with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, masks with clear sections are being sourced as required.

## **Attendance**

Student attendance will be taken for all students that arrive in school using the electronic Trillium Web report program, and a record will be maintained when students are in areas other than their classroom. This will assist Peel and Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health for contact tracing should a positive case of COVID-19 be determined. Online attendance will be recorded separately from in-class attendance.

## **School Signage and Markings**

Signage on walls and floors will help students maintain appropriate physical distancing from one another. The signage will be posted at school entrances and exits, entrances to classrooms, large spaces such as the learning commons, and meeting spaces such as the main office, principal or vice-principal offices, elevators, and resource rooms. Where practical, separation markers will be placed to signal one-way direction within the school. This will assist in maintaining appropriate physical distancing for everyone in the school.

### Playgrounds and Play Structures

No student access to play structures will be permitted during the initial phase of reopening. All play structures will be closed until further notice. Kindergarten play areas will remain open for student outdoor learning.

### Plexiglass Separation for Reception Desk

Portable plexiglass will be installed in high traffic areas where distancing may be problematic, such as at the front reception area of the main office, the learning common circulation desk, and guidance reception areas. Where acceptable physical distancing can be maintained, plexiglass is not needed.

### Thermal Thermometer

Each school will be provided with a thermal thermometer as part of their health/isolation room kit to be used if there is a suspected case of COVID-19. Temperature checks on their own are not reliable indicators of possible COVID-19 infection.

### Hand Sanitizer and Disinfectant Wipes

Hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant wipes will be provided to each school. Hand sanitizer will be placed in all classrooms that do not have a sink. While the sharing of equipment is discouraged, where equipment must be used by more than one student, disinfectant wipes, or cloth/disinfectant spray/solutions will be made available.

### Classes with Sinks and Running Water

Classrooms with running water will receive a supply of hand soap and paper towels.

### Work/Prep/Meeting Rooms

Educator workrooms will be reconfigured to allow for physical distancing. Students will not be permitted in any staff common areas other than classrooms. Where physical distancing is not achievable, alternate workspaces should be provided (i.e., library, resource rooms, meeting rooms, etc.).

While all meetings are to be conducted virtually (including interviews, teacher performance appraisals, etc.), in the event that a meeting/discussion cannot take place virtually, schools should identify a room in which physical distancing can be achieved and PPE available.

### Ventilation and the use of Portable Air Conditioners and Fans in Classrooms

The transmissibility of COVID-19 is known to be influenced by environmental conditions and airflow. In this regard, the DPCDSB is following the guidance of the Ministry and the local public health authorities with respect to the operation of HVAC systems and ventilation in schools to support a safe and healthy environment for all. Over the course of the summer, the condition of all HVAC units was assessed and any necessary maintenance (including filter changes) was undertaken to ensure that all are ready for the start of the new school year. Where possible, bringing additional fresh outdoor air into the school will be completed by caretaking staff. For more information please review the ***Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Status Report*** from the August 25, Regular Board Meeting.

Fans and portable air conditioners are **not allowed** to be used. Based on input from local public health authorities, fans increase the risk of respiratory droplets spreading further through the air.

### Community Use of Schools

Permits will continue to be on hold. As an added measure for safety, we will limit nonessential visitors to the school. Where the use of non-classroom space is allowed, such as libraries and gymnasiums, weight rooms, etc., such use will be staggered to properly provide time between bookings to clean and disinfect.

### Outdoor Space for Recess

Recess will be staggered based on the size of the outdoor space and the availability of supervisors. Where possible, the principal will designate areas outdoors for each cohort to minimize contact with other students from outside the instructional cohort. Principals will develop a schedule and routine that will allow students to maintain appropriate physical distancing while still having an opportunity for fresh air and physical activity. This will require staggering of recesses throughout the day.

### Staff Gatherings

Staff will ensure that physical distancing among staff is maintained as an example for students. Staff will not gather in large groups until this restriction is removed based on the advice of the local public health authorities. This includes staff rooms, where physical distancing is not possible, and in work/seminar rooms. Where staff are using workrooms/staff rooms and sharing spaces throughout the day, they will ensure that their area is wiped down with disinfectant upon arrival and leaving the space.

### Sharing of Resources

Staff will limit student sharing of materials and resources in classes. Adequate supplies for instructional cohorts will be provided to each student. Students will not share resources, i.e., pencils, markers, books, etc. Students will be required to bring their own learning resources, provided by the school if required, to and from school each and every day for their own exclusive use. If a device such as a Chromebook is being scheduled for alternative use, it must be wiped down with the appropriate wipes before changing users. Disinfecting wipes and/or an isopropyl alcohol solution is safe to use on electronic devices. In the event that textbooks need to be shared, administrators and teaching staff will have to develop a strategy to ensure 24 hours between use of shared resources between cohorts.

### Privacy

Staff will follow direction from Peel and Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health regarding what medical/health information related to colleagues, students or their families can be shared. Principals will be the main point of contact for any release of information, with the support of the Family of Schools Supervisory Officer.

### Doors

Where possible, and safe to do so, classroom and office doors will be left open during the day to minimize the number of students or staff that need to open the door physically. All fire doors are to remain closed.

### Technology

DPCDSB will continue to offer professional learning opportunities for staff to ensure that they are positioned to use digital tools effectively. Based on parent feedback, one area of growth is to move to a more centralized communication platform so that students/parents do not need to access multiple platforms for each educator's class. Teachers will use either *Google Classroom* or *Desire to Learn* as their *Learning Management*

System, and all synchronous, live teaching will be delivered using Zoom, Microsoft TEAMS, or Google Meets. Before the start of the school year, the three Professional Development days will be used to prepare for transition between in-person instruction and possible fully online learning if needed in 2020-2021. Every effort will be made to ensure that students have the required technology resources in class and at home to support their learning needs.

A separate protocol for the deployment of devices, including laptops, Chromebooks and internet access will be developed in accordance with system needs. The ICT department will also extend ICT Service Desk support to staff and students to address technology related issues as required.

### **Student Reminders**

Regular reminders will be provided to students on proper hygiene. The goal will be to ensure students are washing their hands on a regular basis. Students will be asked to wash their hands at the start and end of the school day, before and after eating, when returning from outside, and before and after using the washroom. Student belongings, such as coats, shoes, knapsacks, lunch bags, water bottles, must be taken home each day to be cleaned as needed.

### **Water Bottles**

Students will be encouraged to bring their own labelled water bottle to school each day. Water refill stations can be used to refill water bottles. Use of water fountains during this time will not be permitted.

### **Lockers and Cubbies**

Students will not have access to lockers or cubbies at this time, so that all materials will stay with them in the classroom. All bags, shoes, boots, coats, etc., will remain at the student's personal space in each classroom and taken home at the end of every day. This will be revisited as the winter months approach.

### **System Classes**

A review of any required specialized PPE or classroom modifications will be conducted for each self-contained class. Daily access to in-person instruction will be prioritized for students attending system self-contained classes, excluding Gifted and SERC, as long as physical distancing can be maintained within the guidelines of class size limitations during the pandemic.

### **Sharing of Resources**

Principals will consult with DPCDSB central staff (i.e., Health and Safety Department) and their department heads to review specific safety precautions required for classes that traditionally involve the sharing of resources between students (e.g. construction, auto shops, hospitality, science, arts, physical education etc.). Plans must be established for specialized protective equipment that cannot be sanitized between use (e.g., Welding gloves, chaps, coat, coveralls, aprons, oven mitts, lab coats, etc.).

### **School Bus Options and Public Transportation**

Based on Ministry guidelines, all student buses, including special needs vans and wheelchair accessible vehicles, will be loaded at close to full capacity. The seat behind the school bus driver will remain empty. Students from the same household and/or class cohort will be seated together. Students in Grades 1 to 12 will be required to wear a cloth or non-medical grade face mask while waiting at bus stops and while riding the bus, unless they are unable due to medical reasons or special needs. Kindergarten students are not required to wear a mask, however, they are strongly encouraged to do so.

While waiting at bus stops, students and parents/guardians should maintain appropriate physical distancing between family groupings. Once the bus arrives, students should not crowd the front door. Instead, students should line up while maintaining a two-metre physical distance between them, where possible. No more than one student should be on the stairs of the bus at a time. Students should get to their assigned seat and sit down as quickly as possible and place their backpack or other belongings on their lap.

All student transportation drivers and bus monitors will be provided with appropriate PPE, including medical face masks and face shields. Additional PPE, such as gowns and gloves, will be available for drivers of special needs students and bus monitors.

Assigned seating plans for students will be developed for all school buses/vans by Principals. Information about specific seat assignments will be communicated to families. A copy of the seating plan is to be kept at the school and a copy must be provided to the driver. All seats will be clearly numbered and all students must sit in their assigned seat during their ride to and from school.

Each Principal will develop a bus schedule and routine that allows for the loading and unloading of students while maintaining appropriate physical distancing and entry into and out of the school.

Additional information regarding transportation protocols will be provided by *Student Transportation of Peel Region (STOPR)* and *Service de transport de Wellington-Dufferin Student Transportation Services (STWDSTS)*.

### School Busettes and Vans (Secondary)

The use of school busettes and vans will be prohibited until further notice.

### Before and After School Programs

Before and after school programs will be offered at most elementary schools, with revised drop-off/pick-up routines, washroom protocols, and enhanced cleaning procedures. If you have questions about child care, please contact your child care provider directly.

Wherever possible, the program will take place in a designated (licensed) space within the school, typically a classroom used during the school day. Each child attending the program will be assigned to a cohort and will only be able to access the space assigned to their cohort.

At the beginning of the school day, school-aged children in the before-school program will go outside under the supervision of their child care provider and be instructed to join their class cohort. At the end of the school day, school-aged children will remain in their classroom space until the child care provider directs them to join the appropriate after-school program cohort. Information about dropping off and picking up children from the before and after school programs will be communicated by the child care provider.

Cleaning and disinfecting of the space, including instructional materials and equipment, will be completed daily.

### Classroom Setup

Students will remain in the same seat in their class as much as possible. *This area will become the student's personal space and will be located as far as possible from other students.* Where possible, students will remain with the same teacher with minimized rotation. Classroom design will vary from teacher to teacher, but the goal remains to keep everyone at least 1-metre apart. All non-essential furniture and/or large items have been removed from classrooms in order to maximize the space for physical distancing. All student belongings are

kept in their personal area, (i.e., no use of shared spaces such as coat racks or cubbies). The same desk/table should be used by the student each day. Backpacks and clothing should be stored at the student's desk in a manner that provides safe access for all students and staff throughout the classroom.

### **Kindergarten Classrooms**

While 1-metre distancing may not be as practical for kindergarten students, the rule of no physical touching will be reinforced. Activities will be designed for small groups, and furniture and playing areas will be used to help maintain physical separation. Plush toys will be temporarily stored away during the pandemic. Toys and manipulatives will be reduced where possible while still providing students with a wide variety of play-based learning. Toys and manipulatives will be cleaned daily at the end of each day. Additional guidelines based on the success of childcare operations will be reviewed for Kindergarten classes.

### **Submitting Assignments**

Where possible, assignments will be submitted electronically using the *Learning Management System* workspace for which all teachers and students have access. For physical assignments that must be submitted, it is recommended that a location be established in the class to leave assignments rather than directly approaching the educator. While there is no evidence that COVID-19 virus is transmitted via paper, for added precaution, it is recommended that all assignments that are submitted are placed in an area for a minimum of 24 hours before being assessed by the teacher. Where this is not possible, educators are reminded to wash/sanitize their hands after handling materials submitted by students.

### **Class Movement in School**

Consideration will be given to having classes access hallways at different times to minimize hallway traffic throughout the day. Schools are encouraged to eliminate bells that signal all students into the hallways at once. Rotations will be based on schedules developed by school staff. Time will be devoted on the first day of school for students to review the safety protocols and "rehearse" movement through the school.

### **Entry and Dismissal Requirements**

School entry times and dismissal times will be staggered, and multiple entry and exit doors will be used to allow for physical distancing. Students and staff will be required to sanitize their hands as they enter the school and prior to dismissal.

### **Breakfast Programs**

Breakfast programs can continue with the provision of 2-metre distancing, and additional cleaning of the area on a daily basis. The "Grab and Go" format will be implemented. Surfaces, bins, and containers used in all food preparation areas will be disinfected before and after each use.

### **Washrooms**

Washrooms will be marked off to ensure physical distancing of 2-metres when multiple students are in the washroom at the same time. Signage will be placed inside the washrooms, reminding students of both physical distancing and proper hygiene. Washrooms will be cleaned throughout the school day and again each evening. Principals will implement a shared tracking system for staff to record the time and location of student access to washrooms. This will assist with contact tracing if needed. Signage will be placed outside of the washrooms identifying the maximum number of occupants at any given time.

### Classroom Carpets/Rugs

Full groups should not be gathering on shared carpet (rug) areas. Carpets can remain where they are used for regular foot traffic. However, students should not be sitting on carpets unless they are able to maintain the same location on the carpet and can do so while being 2-metres away from the next student. Where possible, carpets that have been used for students to sit on during full group instruction will be rolled up and temporarily set aside during the pandemic.

### After School Activities

There will be no large gatherings until direction is received from the province that these activities can resume. Students can collaborate online for clubs and after school activities. Any online clubs/activities sanctioned by the school will require online supervision.

### Visitors, Volunteers and Parent Access

Visitors, volunteers, and parents/guardians will not be permitted in the schools or on school property with the exception of designated pick-up and drop-off areas. Parents may not enter the school with the exception of a Principal-approved appointment or to pick up their sick child. Anyone entering the school throughout the day will be required to complete the COVID self-assessment tool prior to entering a board facility. Each school will designate a specific area for pick-ups and drop-off to avoid having people walking throughout the school site.

### Emergency Evacuation Drills

Practice emergency evacuation drills will continue. Classes will move throughout the building while maintaining 2-metres between students in the classroom, hallway and at all exits. Each Principal will review with staff where to go in case there is a real emergency, and the school needs to be evacuated. Locations on the school playground or field should be identified that would allow for the maintenance of a 2-metre distance between students. In the event of a real emergency, evacuating all students and staff in a timely manner takes precedence.

### Lockdown Drills

Physical lockdown drills will not take place at this time. A drill will take place that reviews the procedures in the case of a real life-threatening situation. The modified practice drill must adhere to physical distance requirements. In the event of a real life-threatening situation, full compliance with lockdown procedures takes precedence.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Further direction regarding lockdown drills is forthcoming from the Ministry of Education.

### Large Group Gatherings and Assemblies

Peel and Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Public Health and/or the province will provide details of the size of permitted gatherings. In the early phases of return, we do not anticipate any large group gatherings, and where students and/or staff do gather, they will be required to maintain a 2-metre (6 foot) distance from one another. Principals should not schedule any visiting presenters, authors, or artists in the schools. No assemblies will be permitted.

### Classroom Organization

Classroom educators will rearrange their classroom so that at least 1-metre distancing can be maintained between students where possible. There may be instances where larger venues (i.e., Library or Gym) will need

to be used to accommodate larger cohorts of students. In the event that all students return to in-person learning on a daily basis, desks should be arranged, in rows, as far apart as possible. All other non-essential items and furniture in the classrooms will be removed to allow for appropriate physical distancing.

### **Lunchroom/Cafeteria**

In a modified timetable, students will be able to eat lunch in their classrooms. Where the timetable can be compressed to allow for students to return home for lunch or attend another off-site location for lunch, this will be considered. In a regular timetable, students will be allowed to have lunch in the cafeteria as long as social/physical distancing is in place. The number of students in the cafeteria at any one time will be monitored and limited.

Cafeteria food services will not be available in September. Students and parents will be notified when cafeteria services reopen.

There will be no lunch or milk programs in Elementary schools.

Microwaves will not be available for student use. Food from restaurants or chains may not be delivered into schools since visitors are not permitted in the school during this time. Food delivery apps such as Uber Eats, or Skip the Dishes will also not be permitted.

Elementary students should bring a packed lunch to school each day. In the event a student forgets a lunch, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Students will be permitted to leave school property to go home for lunch. While not encouraged, parents can arrange to drop off lunches, if needed.

### **Field Trips**

School staff will only plan virtual field trip experiences until the province has indicated that larger gatherings can take place.

### **Contactless Payments**

To reduce the handling of cash, schools will be required to use and promote the Schoolcash Online Payment System and follow-up with parents/guardians that have not signed up to use the system.

### **Touch Point Cleaning**

Cleaning will take place in all high contact areas including desks, tables, railings, door handles and other surfaces throughout the school. Where a school is open to the students all day, the cleaning will take place at the end of each day with high touchpoint surfaces cleaned throughout the day. Where a school is open based on shifts such as alternating days, touch point cleaning will take place throughout the day and between the rotation of student cohorts. In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected, at minimum, twice per day.

### **Hand Dryers and Paper Towels**

Hand dryers can be used. For those that do not wish to use washroom hand dryers, a supply of paper towels will also be available.

### **Cleaning Products**

Staff will continue to use public health-approved cleaning products where available.

Custodians are responsible for: cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Cleaning involves removing dirt, while sanitizing reduces germs from surfaces up to 99.9%. Disinfecting destroys and prevents bacteria from spreading.

### **Special Attention**

The custodial team at each school will perform cleaning duties and procedures focused on high touch surfaces, including door handles, railings, water fountains, faucets, and areas such as bathrooms, cafeterias and kitchen areas. Special attention will also be focused on classrooms and the isolation room when anyone is sent home for exhibiting any signs of illness.

### **Sanitizer**

The sanitizer will be placed at the front entrance of every school and in every classroom without sinks and refilled as required.

## 2

## Adapting to any Public Health/Ministry of Education direction regarding mode of Catholic teaching and learning.

### Parent Survey

The Parent Survey was undertaken in early August, following the Ministry of Education's announcement of which mode the DPCDSB was going to start the new school year. Parents/Guardians were surveyed regarding whether their child will (would be attending) attend on-site schooling in August/September, based on the DPCDSB plan, or if their child will (would) fully participate online or through another program. Regardless of attendance in person or through distance learning, students will be assigned to a specific class or teacher and to a Learning Management System (i.e., Google Classroom, Brightspace-D2L, etc.). The aim is to provide parents with access to education for their children within their comfort level, be that on-site or through distance learning.

### Potential Phases of Return to In-Person Schooling

1. Conventional Delivery: Full attendance five days per week with enhanced health and safety protocols for cleaning and hygiene practices
2. Adapted Delivery: Partial attendance two or three days in person and two or three days supported learning at home
3. Online Delivery: Five days a week at home with online supported learning by educators every day

### Proposed Models

*For more information on DPCDSB's reopening models, please click [HERE](#)*

### Additional Support for Students with Special Needs

Where class sizes can be maintained at numbers of 15 or below, students that require additional support and who have been placed in a self-contained class by an IPRC, excluding Gifted, can **attend school every day of the week.**

### Outbreaks and Return to Online Learning

There is always the possibility of a return to online learning if an outbreak forces a school to be closed for a lengthy period of time. In preparation for continuity of learning, all staff will be trained on available board-approved tools, including Zoom, TEAMS and Google Meet for video conferencing. All educators will develop a Learning Management System (LMS) for students by using either Google Classroom or Brightspace-Desire to Learn (D2L).

### Outdoor and Non-Classroom Space

Staff will be encouraged to take advantage of outdoor space for instruction where feasible. It will be important to coordinate the use of outdoor space to minimize interactions with other classes during travel times and to ensure that students maintain the 2-metre distance when outdoors.

### Experiential Courses

Some courses will require greater modifications than others given the goal of maintaining appropriate physical

distancing from one another and the need to clean and disinfect any shared equipment. Further direction will be provided to assist staff in modifying activities such as science labs, computer and technology courses, music, physical education, hospitality courses, etc. Where safety cannot be addressed with in-person activities, accommodations will need to be implemented. At this time, we anticipate that CO-OP placements will be permitted, as long as safety guidelines are in place prior to student experiences offsite.

### **Sports – Intramurals and Interscholastic games**

It is recommended that extracurricular sports, clubs, committees and activities that can maintain physical distancing between students resume. Consideration as to whether extracurriculars could be conducted virtually will take place.

High contact sports (e.g., rugby, football, wrestling) will be postponed.

For all structured and unstructured play (including recess, playground use, PE classes, extracurricular sports/activities):

- Students/staff must practice proper hand hygiene before and after play/use of equipment
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between cohort/group use
- Activities should take place outdoors where possible
- Student will be informed to practice physical distancing in changerooms/showers
- Students must not share personal items (e.g., water bottles, towels)

### **Physical Education, Science, The Arts, and Technology-based Courses**

These courses may continue with curriculum modifications to ensure that physical distancing is maintained. The sharing of equipment is not normally permitted (will not be permitted). Where equipment is needed for different classes, the equipment must be sanitized before use. Grade-level physical education activities that can be introduced while maintaining 2-metre distancing are available in the PHE Canada – [Return to School Physical Education and Health Guidelines](#). [Student safety and guidelines](#) will be reviewed and adapted as needed during COVID-19 ([OCS Arts guidelines](#)).

### **Student Transitions**

Special Education and Learning Services Department staff are providing school-based summer transition opportunities for students. These plans are intended to assist students with the changes in routine that a potential hybrid learning model might require in September.

### **International Students**

All international students returning to Canada from another country must self-isolate for 14 days before being allowed to attend DPCDSB schools.

### **Music**

Choir and band practices or performances should be postponed unless they can take place virtually. For music/band:

- Wind or brass instruments, e.g., flutes, clarinets, trumpets, saxophones, will not be used.
- Percussion or string instruments, e.g., piano, drums, can be used while ensuring physical distancing between musicians.

Any shared instruments must be cleaned and disinfected between users.

### **Fitness Rooms and Equipment**

Physical fitness has been shown to have a positive impact on physical and mental well-being. Schools that wish to allow the use of their facilities must ensure that proper cleaning procedures are in place for all equipment that is used. Staff/students must agree to clean all equipment before and after use and maintain 2-metre distances from others that may be in the room simultaneously.

### **Learning Commons**

The Learning Commons or library may still be open to students, however, there will be no book exchange. Schedules must be created that will allow for 2-metre distancing by all students in the learning commons at any given time. Consideration should be given to allow the library to be open in secondary schools for students who have a spare on their schedule. In order to use the books while in the library, students and staff should always sanitize hands when they enter and exit the library.

# 3

## Supporting student faith formation, well-being and achievement.

### Supporting Student Achievement and Well-Being

The DPCDSB is committed to ensuring that student achievement and well-being are supported regardless of the mode of program delivery.

### Supporting Faith Formation and Religious Instruction

As a Catholic school system, we are further committed to ensuring that Religious Education and Family Life instruction, opportunities for celebrating our faith, and a specific emphasis on the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations continue to be a focus for staff and students.

### Social Emotional Learning

During the initial return to school, DPCDSB staff will provide activities prepared by our Well-Being Department that acknowledge and recognize the fear and trauma that have potentially impacted students and their families during the initial stage of isolation. A focus on the whole student will be the priority for the return to school. Targeted support will continue for those that require additional assistance throughout the year. Counselling support will be available to assist with the mental health needs of students.

Each staff member will receive learning activities that foster social emotional learning and that will assist all students with coping skills to support their mental health and well-being. These activities will be provided to students in both in-person and distance learning settings early in the fall when students return to school. Staff will be provided with the resources and training will be provided at (during) the PA Days prior to school start-up.

### Team Approach

School-based solutions will be needed to support staff, student and family challenges. Students will each be assigned to their “regular” classroom teacher. If we are required to move to an adapted or distance learning environment, students will be supported by a team of staff and the classroom teacher who will assign them weekly learning activities. For students who chose online learning exclusively, while classmates are receiving their education in either an adapted or conventional model, coordination of their online teacher will be completed centrally.

### Mentally Healthy Return to School Toolkit

School Mental Health Ontario will provide the following resources to schools:

System Leader Resource Package - messages and slides to support leading a mentally healthy system through COVID-19. (link to be added in mid to late August)

School Leader Resource Package - messages, reflection tools, tip sheets to support leading a mentally healthy school through COVID-19. (link to be added in mid to late August)

Educator Resource Package - professional learning resources for educators to assist in supporting student mental health. Resources will be shared and unpacked on a PD day prior to the start of the school year. (link to be added in mid to late August)

Support Staff Resource Package - learning modules and slides to support student mental health for other caring adults in schools. (link to be added in mid to late August)

Student Resource Package - materials to support older students with self-care and wellness including anxiety management. These resources will be posted on the [COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#), in partnership with jack.org and Kids Help Phone.

Parent and Family Resource Package - Tip sheets to support parents and families with their child's mental health and well-being during the transition to school. (link to be added in mid to late August).