

Date: February 3, 2021

Memorandum to: Students and Parents of Private Schools

From: Jeff Butler
Assistant Deputy Minister
Student Support and Field Services Division

Subject: Ministry of Education Updates

Thank you for your continued support for students and staff.

Based on the most recent data and advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, elementary and secondary schools in schools in Toronto, Peel and York regions will be permitted to resume in-person instruction on Tuesday February 16, 2021.

Private schools are required to align with the direction provided for the Public Health Unit in which their school is located and should continue to follow direction provided by their local Public Health Unit. Before and after school programs will reopen in alignment with the return to in-person learning in their Public Health Unit.

Private schools are encouraged to continue to monitor and adhere to broader provincial direction on workplace guidance.

On January 12, 2021, we announced the provision of additional health and safety measures to support the return to in-person learning, including masking for Grades 1-3 and outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained, enhanced screening protocols, and discouraging students from congregating. Private schools should adopt these measures and continue to reinforce and communicate the importance of these measures to students, staff and parents/guardians. See Appendix A for a summary of health and safety guidance for schools, staff and students.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we continue to ensure the safety of students and staff in this unprecedented school year.

Sincerely,

Jeff Butler
Assistant Deputy Minister

Appendix A: Enhanced Health and Safety Measures

All school boards are required to have health and safety measures in place as outlined in the *Operational guidance: COVID-19 management in schools* and Jan 20 Addendum to Reopening Guidance and are required to communicate these measures consistently to parents/guardians, students and staff.

Key highlights of enhanced health and safety measures introduced to date are noted below.

Self-Screening

- 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 follow the guidance in the [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#) tool regarding when they can return to school.
- All secondary students will require daily confirmation or proof of self-screening upon arrival at school.

Masking

- Mandatory masking requirements for students in Grades 1-12.
- Masks are required indoors at all times and outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Congregating

- School boards are asked to highlight the importance of students not congregating before school starts and returning directly home after school.
- Staff and students are to be discouraged from car-pooling, unless all health and safety measures can be adhered to (e.g., masking).
- Schools should minimize any gatherings in break rooms or staff rooms and ensure that distancing and masking are maintained.
- All existing health and safety measures for staff, including consistent use of recommended PPE and physical distancing, must continue to be maintained.