



Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch Reopening Plan 2020-2021

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Introduction

The Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch (PDSB) serves a community of diverse needs. The top priorities for our community are their health, safety, and well-being while they are learning and working. These priorities are the foundation upon which we have collaborated to prepare for the reopening of our schools, administrative buildings, and residences for the 2020-2021 school year.

To ensure a safe and caring transition back to the school environment for students, their families, and staff, PDSB has been meeting since the closure period began to deal with the unprecedented environment in which we continue to support student learning. In the creation of this plan, we have engaged many stakeholders internally and externally including working with our staff, Joint Health and Safety Committees, union partners, local public health units, the Ministry of Health, including the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD), and partner divisions/branches in the Ministry of Education.

As we move forward in this constantly shifting landscape, we will continue to carefully consider the details of this plan and consult and adapt our plan as necessary, based on advice from public health experts and with ongoing collaboration amongst our stakeholders and external supports. As we approach the return to school this September, the PDSB is committed to communicating necessary information in a timely manner to all families, students, and staff.

In the event of a conflict between the guidance/requirements contained in this document and advice from public health experts (including medical officers of health or their designates i.e. local public health units), the advice of public health experts/officials will prevail.

Guiding Principles

During an outbreak, there is risk of exposure and falling ill and that risk cannot be eliminated. However, we can do what we know works to reduce the risk. We recognize that learning will be different this year and our focus is to make sure that we reduce the risk of virus transmission while providing the highest possible quality of education for our students. This plan presents a range of control strategies for risk-reduction. It also focuses on a foundation of health, safety, high quality teaching and learning, and well-being, and it is based on the following guiding principles:

- 1. Prioritize health and safety** - To reduce the risk of exposure, our decisions and work will be supported by erring on the side of caution when it comes to health and safety, understanding that our shared goal is health and safety through risk and harm reduction by taking every reasonable precaution to protect our staff and students. PDSB will follow Public Health, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education guidance.
- 2. Provide quality education** - address student specific needs and ensure quality programming throughout the service delivery scenarios to keep the focus on advancing student achievement and learning while reducing risk and providing structure and support to build positive mental health and well-being.
- 3. Layer strategies** - recognizing that no one control strategy alone can limit the transmission of disease, we layer all possible controls so that many small interventions and strategies are combined simultaneously.

4. **Share responsibilities** - no single entity is solely responsible for keeping everyone safe. Everyone is a valued contributor and we all need to go the extra mile. Everyone has a critical role to play and it is a full team approach that is needed. Continued collaboration and open, trusting, communication between all staff and managers, stakeholders, students, and parents/guardians is key.
5. **Limit transmission chains** - separate populations as much as possible to limit outbreaks from becoming school-wide (i.e., cohorting).
6. **Be nimble and flexible** - knowledge about COVID-19 is dynamic and our collective understanding will change and so approaches may change. We also have to be ready to change from one scenario to another throughout the year as needed.
7. **Ensure equity** - plans need to address equity needs of our students and staff to ensure we support the health and well-being of students and staff.
8. **Support positive working/learning culture** – demonstrating optimism and resilience as we work together to support positive mental health, well-being, and a positive learning and working environment are foundational to our resilience and everyone’s personal health.

Service Delivery Scenarios

On July 30, 2020, the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education announced that students in Ontario would return to school in September following a conventional model with enhanced health and safety protocols. This plan outlines the conventional scenario for our Kindergarten to Grade 12+ students. It is important to note that this plan also outlines the Adapted and Distance/Remote Learning scenarios should the need arise to enter one or both of these scenarios/models as the status of COVID-19 changes in the region or province. These decisions are made by the Ministry of Education based on a number of factors to reduce risk (i.e., the risk of exposure).

It is important to note that during the 2020-21 school year, parents/guardians always have the option of selecting a fully remote/distance learning model for their child instead of sending the student to school. In this case, the student would work as part of a fully online classroom with a teacher in a virtual classroom setting.

Conventional Scenario (normal school day routine with enhanced health and safety protocols)

Elementary: Normal weekly timetable with physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning protocols in place.

- Face coverings (non medical grade masks) will be mandatory for students in Grades 4 to 12 and encouraged for Kindergarten - Grade 3 students. They should be worn when indoors except during lunch breaks.
- Masks can be taken off once outside and physically distanced, while eating, or when in a private space. Staff are encouraged to build mask free time into the regular daily schedule for both staff and students (i.e., go outside to get a mask break).
- Students are asked to bring their own non-medical mask and are encouraged to practice wearing a mask. PDSB will have masks on hand in case a student needs one.
- Consider building mask washing and care into the daily schedule in school and/or residence so that it is cleaned properly and regularly.

- Nurses can provide training on the importance, use, and cleaning of facial masks.
- Students should remain with their assigned classmates throughout the day. Rotary subjects where students rotate to different classrooms is discouraged at this time.
- All classes are expected to have an online learning environment (Google platform) in place and used throughout the year.

Secondary: Modified weekly timetable with physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning protocols in place.

- Face coverings (non-medical masks) for all Grades 9 to 12+ students are mandatory and should be worn when indoors except during lunch breaks.
- All classes are expected to have an online learning environment (Google platform) in place and used throughout the year
- Teachers should create and incorporate some online learning components into a conventional model using the Google platform and other branch-approved digital tools so that a seamless entry into Distance Learning model can occur should the need arise. This model also supports students who intermittently need to participate in a blend of remote and in-person learning.

Adapted Scenario (with enhanced health and safety protocols)

Elementary:

- All kindergarten students will receive a minimum of 180 minutes of real-time synchronous (live) instruction; and all students in Grade 1 to 8 will receive a minimum of 225 minutes of synchronous instruction.
- Staff supporting students remotely should provide both synchronous and asynchronous instruction to students following the schedule for the class.
- Students are also expected to complete independent activities and assignments provided by the in-class teacher while learning at home.
- Considerations: Where possible, in an adaptive model, synchronous learning should occur so that students who are scheduled to learn at home can connect with students who are in class. Teachers will use the Google platform and other approved digital tools to deliver both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Suggestions might include mindfulness sessions, community building activities, welcome message, classroom meetings, etc. Students will attend school in their cohort every other week.

Secondary:

- It is the expectation that every school day all students receive the higher of 60 minutes for each 75-minute class period or 225 minutes per day of synchronous learning for a full course schedule should the school enter into either adapted or distance learning in the 2020-21 school year.
- Both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities are necessary to engage students and provide personalized instruction and assessment and successful credit accumulation.
- Teachers will use the Google platform and other branch-approved digital tools to deliver both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Students will attend school in their cohort every other week.

Enhanced Distance/Remote Learning Scenario: Requirements for Remote Learning

During full or partial school closures, or under any other periods of remote learning, students in Ontario's Provincial and Demonstration Schools are encouraged to be engaged in their learning and continue to have access to their school community, a support network, and authentic educational experiences in order to continue to progress in their learning.

In the context of this *Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch Reopening Plan 2020-2021* and pursuant to the [Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164 \(2020\)](#), the following are definitions of "remote", "synchronous", and "asynchronous" learning:

- **Remote learning:** Learning that occurs when classes are taught at a distance and when students and educators are not in a conventional classroom setting. Remote learning takes place in times of extended interruption to in-person learning – for example, as a result of a pandemic or natural disaster. Classes can be synchronous or asynchronous and can be taught online through a Learning Management System (LMS) or by using videoconferencing tools. In some cases, they may be delivered through emails, print materials, broadcast media, or telephone calls.
- **Synchronous learning:** Learning that happens in real time. Synchronous learning involves using text, video, or voice communication in a way that enables educators and other members of the school- or board-based team to instruct and connect with students in real time. Synchronous learning supports the well-being and academic achievement of all students, including students with special education needs, by providing educators and students with an interactive and engaging way to learn. It helps teachers provide immediate feedback to students and enables students to interact with one another.
- **Asynchronous learning:** Learning that is not delivered in real time. Asynchronous learning may involve students watching pre-recorded video lessons, completing assigned tasks, or contributing to online discussion boards.

Minimum Requirements for Engaging Students during Remote Learning

During remote learning, students, and parents are to be provided with a daily schedule or timetable that includes 300 minutes of learning opportunities, with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. Programming must be based on the full Ontario curriculum and include opportunities for guided instruction, large- and small-group learning, synchronous check-ins, and asynchronous independent work.

Staff will be available to support any additional accommodations, transitions plans, and alternative programming (i.e., alternative programming identified in a student's IEP, Positive Behaviour Support Plan, etc.) required. These supports should be identified in the IEP in collaboration with the student (where possible), the parent, and the school/residence team for all three school scenarios: conventional, adapted, and fully remote.

Minimum Requirements for Synchronous Learning

During periods of remote learning where students are at home **for more than three days in a given week**, students are to be provided with synchronous learning. The minimum requirements for synchronous learning help to ensure that students have access to both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities for 300 minutes each day in elementary and, in secondary, for students with a full timetable.

The scheduled synchronous learning sessions must be communicated to parents and students. Educators should use their professional judgement to provide some flexibility to students on an individual basis when students are unable to participate in synchronous learning.

It is detailed below the minimum amount of time per day that students, depending on their grade level, must be provided with synchronous learning as part of their scheduled or timetabled learning.

Elementary:

Kindergarten - Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time Requirement* – 180 minutes
Grades 1 to 3 - Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time Requirement* – 225 minutes
Grades 4 to 8 - Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time Requirement* – 225 minutes

Secondary:

Grades 9 to 12 - Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time Requirement* - the higher of 60 minutes for each 75-minute class period** or 225 minutes per day for a full course schedule

* This is in addition to asynchronous learning time.

** The synchronous learning time requirement for any period that is not 75 minutes should be adjusted to reflect this ratio.

The synchronous learning time requirements outlined in the table above may be divided into shorter periods throughout the school day. For example, a child in Kindergarten may participate in an opening exercise for 10 minutes with their whole class, as well as a combination of whole-group and small-group sessions throughout the school day, and a 10-minute closing exercise with their class at the end of the school day.

Additional guidance:

- Accommodations, modified expectations, differentiated support, and instruction and alternative programming will continue to be provided as detailed in student IEPs. Schools and families will continue to work collaboratively to meet the educational needs of each student.
- PBSD plans to provide synchronous learning for large and small groups of students each day, in a manner similar to in-person classroom teaching.
- Synchronous learning time may include students working independently and in small groups while engaged in a virtual classroom with the teacher overseeing their learning and available for questions. The synchronous learning requirements are a part of the 300-minute instructional day during which teachers remain available to students as per the previous section "Minimum Requirements for Engaging Students during Remote Learning."

- Additional group meetings may take place between educators and students as needed to address specific learning needs.
- Where possible, synchronous opportunities should occur so that students can connect with each other and with the teacher to support positive mental health and resilience. Suggestions might include mindfulness sessions, community building activities, welcome message, classroom meetings, etc.
- Per PPM 164, teachers should work from a school facility during remote learning, where possible, with reasonable accommodations, if required. If this is not possible, teachers should maintain regular communication with the principal.

Access to Remote Learning

PDSB will work collaboratively with parents to ensure that all students have access to remote learning devices and the Internet during periods of remote learning.

Roles and Responsibilities related to Remote Learning

Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch:

- Sets out policies, procedures, and protocols in accordance with Ministry of Education direction, policies and guidance for school boards (modified as appropriate for PDSB schools) and relevant legislation requirements, considering the rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, educational assistants, early childhood educators, and other school staff during remote learning.
- Ensures requirements outlined in PPM 164 are implemented by the beginning of the 2020-21 school year.
- Informs students and parents about remote learning requirements, including the process for exemption from synchronous learning, and expectations for student attendance and engagement.
- Communicates process for how parents can inform the school of any issues that their child may be experiencing with remote learning and provide steps that parents may take to resolve any issues.
- Provides continued access to assistive technology, including Special Equipment Amount (SEA), where possible, to support students with special education needs as they participate in remote learning. In situations where access to assistive technology is not feasible, educators are expected to work with students and parents to determine workable solutions on an individual basis.
- Ensures that educators in Provincial and Demonstration Schools follow PDSB-established procedures related to online safety, privacy, and cyber security.
- Approve synchronous learning platform and provide teachers with a standardized suite of synchronous learning platforms to ensure that students have a consistent learning experience and provide teachers with training on these platforms. The platforms must allow real-time communication between educators, students, and parents during remote learning.
- Supports educators in accessing remote learning devices and tools to support remote and synchronous instruction.
- Develops and will implement a process for regular data collection, and to collect data related to remote learning.
- Review how attendance counsellors could be used to further support student attendance, engagement, and well-being.

Principals:

- Participate in remote learning, plan, where possible, to assign different educators to facilitate both formats of instruction.
- Ensure that student attendance records are submitted and that a staff member is assigned to contact parents in the case of an unexpected absence, in accordance with school and board attendance protocols.
- Ensure that educators have access to a suite of appropriate technology products, tools, and resources to support the delivery of remote learning.

Parents:

- In cases where a student is unable to participate in a synchronous learning session – for example, their device may be shared with a parent in the home – parents should inform teachers so they can work together to find solutions (e.g. implement any curriculum and assessment accommodations) on an individualized basis.
- Work collaboratively with PDSB, educators, and principals to support their children’s learning, development, and well-being.
- Inform PDSB and principals in challenges related to obtaining remote learning devices or issues with internet connectivity.
- For changes to the minimum required minutes of synchronous learning, send a request in writing to the principal.

Educators:

- Oversee learning and be available to answer questions.
- Develop and implement programming based on the full Ontario curriculum and include opportunities for guided instruction, large- and small-group learning, synchronous check-ins, and asynchronous independent work.
- Be available to students at all times during the teachers' assigned teaching timetables, as they would be if they were face-to-face in a classroom setting.
- Communicate with the principal, students, and parents a regular schedule of synchronous learning sessions that fulfills the minimum time requirements, as part of their remote learning timetable.
- In cases where a student is unable to participate in a synchronous learning session – for example, their device may be shared with a parent in the home – parents should inform teachers so they can work together to find solutions (e.g. implement any curriculum and assessment accommodations) on an individualized basis.
- Accommodate parents who request a meeting through other modes (e.g., by telephone, through a virtual platform) when an in-person meeting is not possible.
- Provide daily opportunities for each student to receive meaningful feedback.
- The policy outlined in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010* continues to apply during periods of remote learning and teachers should employ assessment for, as, and of learning (including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment), as required.
- Provide differentiated support to all students, including for students with special education needs who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Clinical and other professional and support staff (e.g. CAs):

- Clinical and other professional and support staff are considered ‘educators’ and ‘staff’ and are part of the team of networked support provided to students based on their specific special needs. They provide ongoing support to students both in-person and via remote.

Residence

- In order to better protect the health and safety of our students and staff and adapt and succeed in this new COVID-19 environment, PDSB will be implementing a change to the residence program which will have students in residence staying overnight on alternating school weeks. During the week they are not in residence, students will participate in school via remote learning. Alternatively, parents/guardians who are able to do so may drop students off and pick them up daily from school.
- The same risk reduction strategies in place in schools will be in place in residences.
- **Physical Distancing:**
 - Maximize physical distancing at all times.
 - Hallway movement will be managed by staff to ensure cohorts do not mix or have close contact with other staff or students. Signs will be placed to indicate the direction and flow.
- **Common areas:**
 - Will have maximum capacity posted in the room. Users of common areas should be practicing physical distancing in those spaces.
 - A schedule will be created by the Residence Management team to identify the staggered use of common areas, activities areas, eating areas, etc. in order to ensure that cohorts of students use specific areas at various times.
 - Shared workspaces are to be cleaned and disinfected between uses by different individuals (i.e. remote controls, telephones, other shared items).
 - Communal items will be avoided and objects that can not be disinfected will be removed or provided for use by a single student. Any shared equipment that is used should be cleaned and disinfected after use by each person.
 - Each student will have a container in their room for their own toys, games, and other items. Personal items are not to be shared.
- **Microwaves:**
 - Students will not be able to use microwaves in residence but may ask residence staff to heat up food for them.
 - Staff using microwaves in residences at the request of students are to clean the microwave after each use.
- **Family Visits/Visitors:**
 - Family visitors will be permitted for students in residence. Family visits must be pre-authorized (by the Residence Manager) and family visitors must meet PDSB screening and masking requirements for family visitors.
 - Visits by family members would be encouraged to take place outdoors or off-site. Where this is not possible, family visits could take place in the lobby or other common area of the

- residence but visitors would not be allowed into the sleeping quarters of the residence as other students would be congregating there outside of school hours.
- To foster adherence to PDSB physical distancing measures, minimize the number of individuals visiting at any one time, and to allow for an equitable approach for visitation to all students in residence, there would be limits prescribed regarding the numbers of visitors and number of visits allowed.
 - Parents/guardians are required to communicate with their designated residence counsellor to arrange visiting times where possible at least 24 hours in advance.
 - The pre-authorized family visitor, once they arrive for their visit, must connect with the student support counsellor (SSC) to let them know they have arrived at the residence. The student will be escorted by staff to the main doors, if being picked up by an approved visitor, staff will be required to confirm the visitor's ID prior to releasing the student. When the student is being dropped back off at the residence, phone or text message to the residence counsellor to let the SSC know they have arrived back to school/residence.
 - Residence staff should maintain a record of these visits for contact tracing purposes.
- **Cohorts:**
 - Cohorts must stay together and not come into contact with other cohorts (Conventional: up to 50 contacts in a cohort). Cohorting will mirror classroom assignments where possible. Please note that several factors are considered when placing students in residence.
 - Where possible, staff members will be assigned to care for only one cohort of residents during each shift.
 - Staggering the use of common areas and having capacity limits in these areas to ensure proper physical distancing. Cleaning and disinfecting of common areas to take place as per the normal daily routine with added focus on touch points.
 - **Masks:**
 - Students in grades 4 to 12+ in residence are required to wear a non-medical mask (i.e., face covering) unless alone in their room or outside or eating a meal.
 - Students in Kindergarten to grade 3 in residence will be encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical mask.
 - Reasonable requests for exceptions to masking requirements will be reviewed by PDSB staff.
 - **Meals:**
 - Breakfast in residence with physical distancing (meals are grab and go, no meal making together). Demonstration school students will eat dinner in the residence. Extended day program Demonstration students will eat dinner at a determined location in the school taking into consideration physical distancing for Demonstration Schools due to the Extended Day program. Dinners at WRMS and the Schools for the Deaf are in residence.
 - Residence staff will be assigned to pick up dinners and deliver them to cohorts of students at a designated time. Eating times will be staggered and physical distance will be maximized between students. Where possible, students will face in the same direction. There will be no common food or condiment containers or cutlery/utensils.
 - Communal dining will be suspended unless physical distancing is possible.
 - **Accommodation:**
 - Single occupancy in rooms for students. Siblings from the same household can share the same room. In some cases, a student may have a roommate who has occupancy of the room on the opposite weeks. A deep clean of residence rooms will take place on Fridays.

- In residence, isolation rooms will be the student's own bedroom. PDSB will work with the local public health unit to determine appropriate arrangements and cohorting in the case of an outbreak.
- Each student in isolation will be assigned their own private washroom.
- Students who are isolated in residence may be electronically monitored (i.e., baby monitor with the permission of the parent/guardian) if there is no window in the door providing a clear line of view.
- Arrangements will be made so that students can ask for/call for help when they are isolated in their rooms.
- Residential programs cannot guarantee students will remain in the same bedroom for the duration of the school year. Rooms will be cleaned weekly after students have left for that week.
- Non-essential common areas will be blocked off, placing them out of service. All non-essential equipment and/or equipment that is difficult to clean or disinfect should also be removed from common areas.
- The entry door for each residence will be assigned by the Residence Manager.
- One student and two adult family members will be permitted into the building for approximately one hour on their scheduled date and time to move in and set up. Students will be staggered throughout the week for room setup. For students who arrive on regular school transportation to move into residence, this will not apply. Family members are asked to wear a medical mask. The move in date will be rescheduled if either the student or family member is symptomatic.
- Students are asked to limit items they bring to residence to ensure rooms remain organized and to facilitate appropriate deep cleaning.
- Windows in residence will be kept open as much as possible in order to increase ventilation.
- Students will be assigned a washroom and shower to use. Washrooms may be shared but students will not use washrooms at the same time. In cases where students share a washroom, shower schedules will be created so that one student showers in the morning and another in the evening to allow for cleaning to occur while the students are at school for the day.
- Students are asked to take bedding and clothing home after each week to be laundered, wherever feasible. If not, the bedding and towels will be laundered at the residence.
- Activities requiring close contact will be discontinued.
- Group community outings will not be scheduled.

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

- Residence Managers will issue broad communications to parents and will provide regular updates on health and safety protocols.
- If required, calls or video conferencing will be arranged with students and parents/guardians as information becomes available.
- Staff will engage in virtual sessions with their cohort of students who will be learning from home.

Emergency Contact:

- As part of registration for school and residence, PDSB families will be asked to provide the name and contact information of three emergency contacts who could be called at any time to pick up the student if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

PDSB depends on the full cooperation of the entire school community, including parents and guardians, to address the COVID-19 public health situation. In order to prevent or limit any spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 within the school community, parents, guardians, or emergency contacts if applicable, will be expected to promptly pick up students when requested to do so if a student presents with COVID-19 symptoms, as the PDSB will be unable to transport students back home in these situations. A private vehicle will be required to pick up symptomatic students.

Residence Isolation Rooms:

- In residence, if a student requires isolation, a student's bedroom will be their isolation room and a private washroom must be provided for the student's use.
- Basic necessities such as food, water, medications, etc. must be provided to the student in their room.
- If a student has a roommate, that roommate will need to be provided with a separate isolation room and private washroom.

Interpreting Services

Until further notice, Interpreting Services will continue to be offered remotely through Video Remote Interpreting - VRI. The safety of staff and students is paramount and the transitory nature of conventional in-person interpreting conflicts with expectations of staying within one limited cohort.

The requirement for staff to wear medical grade masks indoors prohibits clear visual communication, which is the primary function of sign language interpreters. Remote interpreting allows for unencumbered communication without masks and should be attempted before requesting an exception for in-person interpretation. The need for close physical proximity, constant movement to and from various assignments, face to face interaction, and temptation to remove layers of PPE to enhance communication, place both the interpreter and Deaf and hard of hearing student/staff members at higher risk of transmission.

The only exception to this will be if an interpreter is required in a classroom and remains in that one cohort. The same safety protocol will be followed in those situations where the interpreter will be required to wear a medical grade mask, maximize distance from others and be included in the contact tracing list for that class.

As previously directed, all meetings involving staff will be online and as such, interpreters for meetings can be requested through the standard process.

Questions can be directed to the Manager of Interpreting Services, Tammy Care at tammy.care@ontario.ca

Resource Services

Until further notice, Resource Services will continue to be offered remotely through synchronous sessions. At a future date, Play and Learning Centres will be the first to open for in-person services. These centres are currently located in our school buildings and, as such, we will not be bringing additional visitors into those spaces. The safety of staff, students, and families is paramount and the transitory nature of conventional in-person delivery requires a setting and PPE that meets health and

safety requirements. Consultations with school boards will also be done via video to support the cohort strategy within schools. We will be working with community partners to identify regional spaces that we can use to deliver support in person to families in the future. The same safety protocol will be followed in those situations where the teacher will be required to wear a medical grade mask, maximize distance from others and be included in the contact tracing list for that site.

The requirement for staff to wear medical grade mask while indoors prohibits clear visual communication, which is the primary function of sign language. Remote delivery allows for unencumbered communication without masks. In cases where the child is not able to engage via synchronous video, efforts will be made to move to a parent support model in which the video time is focused on teaching the parent the skills to teach the child and providing coaching to the parent. The need for close physical proximity, constant movement to and from various assignments, face to face interaction, and temptation to remove layers of PPE to enhance communication, place both the teacher and the Deaf or hard of hearing student and family members as well as school board staff at higher risk of transmission. As previously directed, all meetings involving staff will be online.

PDSB Resource Services will continue to support District School Boards in their need for specific assessments for Deaf, hard of hearing, blind, low vision and deafblind students. Where this is not possible via video connection, students will be prioritized upon return to in-person assessments.

Questions can be directed to the Principal of Resource Services:

- For the Deaf or hard of hearing: Julia.robinson@ontario.ca
- For the deafblind, blind or low vision: Dan.Maggiacomo@ontario.ca

Mental Health and Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) Services

Clinical services provided by the Social Workers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Psychologists, and Psychiatrists will continue to be offered remotely unless clinically required. This reduces the number of individuals present on campus and the need for travel across campus. This also reduces students' prolonged exposure to staff who would be meeting with other students, and to rooms in which other students have been present for extended periods of time. For students who require in-person services due to clinical need (e.g., play therapy, art therapy, psychological testing) in-person services may be arranged and will follow the health and safety protocols.

Health and Safety

PDSB is implementing a layered approach using various protective factors within the hierarchy of controls. Adaptations to schedules and class time etc. may be required as part of our enhanced health and safety protocols throughout the day and at transition times. In our school and residence scheduling and procedures, we are prioritizing physical distancing such that we endeavour to avoid, wherever possible, lines and congestion areas of people. All staff, students, and visitors are asked to follow physical distancing measures in place in all PDSB schools and residences. We are also looking to increase ventilation/air flow by opening windows and working/learning outside when possible. As such, students are asked to come to school ready to learn outside (i.e., appropriate hats, sunscreen, etc.)

Hierarchy of Controls (1 is highest level of control)

The levels in the hierarchy of controls, in order from most effective to least effective, are:

1. Elimination:

Physically remove the hazard – *Example: close sites and stay home*

2. Substitution:

Replace a hazardous substance with something less hazardous (for example, replace one chemical with another). For an infectious disease such as COVID-19, substitution is not an option.

3. Engineering Control

- make physical changes to separate workers from the hazard or support physical distancing, disinfecting and hygiene. For example, you could install plexiglass barriers

4. Administrative and Work Practice Controls

Make changes to the ways people work and interact, using policies, procedures, training and signage. For example, you could:

- create policies to limit the number of people in a space at one time
- stagger work shifts and breaks
- establish new cleaning and disinfection protocols
- provide education and training on proper hand washing technique

5. PPE

This is equipment and clothing worn by a worker to minimize exposure to hazards and prevent illnesses and infection. PPE is used to protect the wearer and can include such things as surgical/procedure masks and eye protection.

***Elimination or substitution of a virus from a school, residence, or workplace that is open during a pandemic situation is not possible.**

In general, more intense, more frequent, and/or longer duration exposures have a higher risk. There are three components of exposure: intensity, frequency, and duration. In the case of COVID-19, we can reduce the risk of illness through interventions that reduce any or all of these three characteristics:

- **Intensity** of exposure may be minimized by maximizing physical distancing following appropriate hand hygiene practices, observing respiratory etiquette (i.e., cover nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing) and wearing masks for source control.
- **Frequency** of exposure may be minimized by reducing how often someone is in close contact with individuals who may be infectious.
- **Duration** of exposure may be minimized by spending less overall time, particularly indoors, in close contact with others.

Safety Protocols for Performing Tasks/Work

Physical Distancing

Public health experts continue to advise that physical distancing is a ***critical safety practice everywhere***. All staff, students, and workers are required to practice physical distancing at all times in the building and outside.

Ensure you maximize physical distance between yourself and others at all times. (Exceptions will apply only based on the specific special needs of a student - appropriate PPE will be required for these cases).

Masking Requirements:

Students

All PDSB students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear face coverings (non-medical or cloth masks indoors) when they are:

- in school, including in all common areas, hallways, and during classes
- in common areas or shared rooms/spaces in residences;
- on a PDSB operated or arranged form of transportation (e.g. on buses).

PDSB students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are encouraged, but not required, to wear face coverings in indoor spaces and on PDSB operated or arranged transportation.

Staff (including itinerant teachers and casual staff)

Staff of PDSB are required to wear medical masks (i.e. surgical/procedural masks).

Some PDSB staff provide direct care to students (e.g. helping with feeding, bathing, washing, turning, changing clothing, etc.) and/or behaviour management and physical redirection where physical distancing cannot be maintained. In these circumstances, staff should assess the need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) beyond masks based on the nature of the planned or anticipated interaction with a student and consistent with any individualized care/behaviour plans in place for the student.

PDSB will supply surgical/procedure masks and eye protection as well as other forms of PPE as required to all PDSB educators and staff.

Visitors

All essential and family visitors to a PDSB school or residence are to wear a medical (i.e., surgical/procedure) mask while on the premises of a PDSB school or residence.

Reasonable exceptions to the above masking requirement may be granted to family visitors.

PDSB schools and residences will provide surgical/procedure masks to visitors who do not bring such a mask with them.

Follow Safety Precautions

Perform only the tasks that have been assigned to you using all of the safety precautions listed in this protocol and while wearing the PPE provided for the task. When wearing gloves or a mask, replace as often as needed, or when they become soiled or torn.

Respiratory Etiquette

Cough/sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and put the tissue in the garbage can in the area where you are working. Wash your hands immediately or use hand sanitizer.

Avoid Touching Your Face (eyes, nose or mouth)

Avoid touching your face. Avoid touching your face with a glove on. Ensure you wash your hand properly immediately after removing gloves.

Hand Hygiene

Appropriate hand hygiene is one of the most important protective strategies. Nurses will be prepared to train students on appropriate hand hygiene, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub. Reinforcing this procedure can involve scheduling breaks to allow students to wash their hands at appropriate times during the school day.

Safety Concerns

If you have concerns about your personal safety while performing work, please contact your Supervisor/Manager.

PDSB's Layered Risk Reduction Strategies

Healthy Culture**Healthy Spaces and Healthy Buildings****Healthy Policies and Healthy Activities and Healthy Schedules****Healthy Learning****Health and Safety protective factors support a Healthy Culture and Healthy Learning**

Healthy Culture

Healthy Culture is foundational to personal and community health, wellness, and readiness to learn. We are navigating a new way of doing things that will continue to review and revise our course. Our culture needs to be healthy so that we can continue to adapt and problem solve new challenges together with optimism, resilience, and a team spirit. Working and learning in a healthy culture go a long way to keeping us personally healthy. A healthy culture is built on teamwork and trust. The following are the attitudes to which we commit ourselves to ensure a healthy culture at PDSB:

Healthy Culture: Risk Reduction Attitudes:

- Be positive and open to change - innovative, optimistic, collaborative, and flexible
- Make idea sharing safe and expected
- Explain or find out why vs blaming
- Bring possible solutions when identifying problems
- Trust that others act out of best intentions
- Help each other to be their best - lift each other up and surround yourself with people who inspire you to be your best
- Hold high and clear expectations and support others to meet them (i.e., with descriptive feedback)
- Take time to recognize those who have made a positive difference

Healthy Spaces

In classrooms, teachers and students can prevent the spread of COVID-19 by washing their hands, maximizing physical distancing, maximizing group distancing, cohorting, teachers wearing PPE or teachers and students wearing face coverings, and avoiding shared objects. These recommendations work together to reduce the risk of exposure by close contact, long-range airborne transmission, and fomites (i.e., materials which are likely to carry infection, such as clothes, utensils, and furniture). Each strategy complements the others to mitigate the overall risk of transmission.

As part of a multi-layered strategy that includes physical distancing and other control measures, face masks are an effective way to mitigate transmission from individuals who are infectious, even when they do not have symptoms. When worn properly, masks can limit the spread of respiratory droplets and when people breathe, speak, cough or sneeze. This is called “source control”. It’s important to note that, on their own, face shields are less effective at source control, especially for aerosols generated by speaking, sneezing and coughing due to a looser fit around the face. However, for those who are not able to wear face masks, a face shield may be an alternative to wearing no mask at all.

Whereas physical distancing focuses on preventing infection transmission between classmates in the same room, group cohorting aims to reduce the risk of an infection leading to a widespread outbreak in the school. For example, group cohorting means that students in one class are kept separate from students in other classes, so these class groups avoid being in the same location (e.g., classroom, cafeteria, playground) at any given time.

Healthy Spaces: Risk Reduction Strategies

- Staff and visitors wear medical masks (and other PPE as required)
- Students in Grades 4 to 12+ wear non-medical masks
- Adhere to screening requirements
- Wash hands frequently
- Maximize physical distancing to protect individuals
- Practice cohorting to slow transmission chains
- Disinfect objects between users

Physical Distancing

- Maximize distancing as much as possible between students, between students and staff and between staff members should always be promoted.
- Schools are encouraged to locate larger classes in larger spaces and to use all available space in a school, including gyms and libraries. Principals and Residence Managers may repurpose other large, unused spaces in the school as temporary classrooms (i.e., library, gym, etc.).
- Replace hugs, handshakes, and high-fives with other ways of greeting.

Group Distancing and Cohorts

- Keep class groups as distinct and separate as possible:
 - Cohorted classes will stay together and with one staff member, where possible. There may be changes in the timing of recesses, lunches, and bathroom breaks as they are staggered to support cohorting. Specialized teachers, like French teachers, will still be able to go into classrooms to provide the full breadth of programming for students as long as cohorts can be maintained. Students will also be able to leave their classrooms to receive additional

supports but direct and indirect contacts in elementary schools for students should be limited to approximately 50; and to 100 in secondary schools.

- Schools must ensure records of classes, including seating charts, and bus cohorts are maintained and readily available to be provided to public health for contact tracing purposes.
- Limit students moving between different classrooms.
- Avoid large groups and gatherings, both in and outside of school (i.e., assemblies, concerts, dances). Virtual options should be offered instead of in person gatherings.
- Choose lesson plans and activities that limit student contact.
- Provide students with their own separate supplies whenever possible. Schools should consider protocols for housing and distributing individual student supplies and materials. Educators should practice with students how to access their materials when they are needed.

Screening

Staff, Students, and Visitors

- Prior to entering a PDSB school or residence, all staff will need to be actively screened (i.e., answer questions regarding symptoms, travel, contact with others).
- PDSB staff will use a standardized questionnaire to actively screen staff.
- For students not in residence and under age 16 years, parents must screen their children before they leave to go to school. Parents can use the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) for this purpose. Students 16 years and older must complete the same self-assessment
- Students who live in residence who are under age 16 years of age will be screened by residence/school staff before going to class. Should a student 16 years or older require staff support to complete the screening, this will be arranged.
- All staff and students who are experiencing new or worsening symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must not attend school and should seek appropriate medical attention as required, including getting tested at a COVID-19 testing centre.
- Staff and students feeling sick should remain at home while waiting for test results.
- If a symptomatic individual tests positive for COVID-19, they should continue to remain in isolation at home and follow the directions of their local public health unit.
- Visitors will also be subject to established PDSB screening requirements.

Awareness

- School Administrators must ensure school staff are aware of their responsibility to assess themselves daily and throughout the day for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school.
- School Administrators will:
 - Clearly communicate with parents/guardians their responsibility to perform an assessment of their children (under age 16 years) daily before sending them to school. Paper copies may need to be provided to schools for those families that do not have access to the online screening tools/questions.
 - Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school to be sent home as soon as possible.

Signage

- The following signage will be installed in each school, residence, and administrative building in PDSB and, where appropriate, will take the form of pictures and colours:
 - Physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, one way/directional markers, access requirements, and maximum occupancy of common areas
 - Additional signage may be required as directed by the local public health unit
 - Signs should be posted at entrances to the school to remind students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, and essential visitors of screening requirements.
- [COVID-19 Resources](#)

Classroom and Common Rooms/Areas Set-up

- To prepare these rooms, items that cannot be cleaned or disinfected by the custodial staff, including soft surfaces and area rugs, will need to be removed or stored in a cupboard that is not accessed by students. Remaining items that cannot be cleaned by the custodial staff will be the cleaning responsibility of the staff member occupying that common space.
- Clear floor spaces of any unneeded furnishings to make more room for physical distancing. Furniture should all be washable (with disinfectant) wherever possible.
- Increased frequency of cleaning of high touch surfaces and permanent carpets will be a part of the enhanced cleaning protocols.
- Students will be asked to leave any unnecessary personal items at home and keep their desks clean and uncluttered to ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting.
- Staff will be required to keep their desk/personal area clear of any clutter to ensure daily cleaning and disinfecting. Personal items belonging to staff should be minimized at work to assist in reducing clutter/objects to be cleaned.
- The use of classroom computers, apart from those assigned to an individual, should be limited and should be cleaned after each use.
- Staff will consider student seating. Desks are to face the same direction and maintain a maximum distance. They also need to leave space for the teacher or others to pass at a maximized distance. Recognizing that this poses a difficulty for our Schools for the Deaf in which students need to see each other, consideration needs to be made for set up such that time spent facing each other is minimized as much as possible as this increases risk of transmission. For Demonstration Schools and classrooms using a reading table set-up, the same consideration will need to be made as for Schools for the Deaf. Staff will consider student seating in classrooms where collaborative tables are present to ensure distancing requirements are respected to the best of our ability.

Toys and Manipulatives

- As much as possible, students and staff should not be sharing materials and should have their own supply. If shared materials are required, limit use of material and/or limit number of students using the same material. Promote frequent cleaning of materials (e.g., between use) and/or hand hygiene. As much as possible, objects that cannot be easily cleaned or disinfected should not be brought into the school. Materials and resources with which students come into contact during the day will be limited and all shared resources are to be cleaned/disinfected in between uses. This includes toys and manipulatives, etc. Students should have their own bin and teachers/counsellors will need to determine best ways to store and distribute. No sharing pencils, crayons, etc. amongst students.
- Only items which can be easily disinfected will be selected to be used.

- No plush toys will be permitted in schools/residences as they cannot be adequately disinfected.
- Schools and residences will need to identify rooms/non-used areas for storage of PDSB-purchased furniture and materials that have been temporarily removed from classrooms.

Photocopy, Staff Rooms, and Meetings

- Use of educator or staff work rooms is largely discouraged. Staff rooms must be reconfigured to allow for physical distancing when they must be accessed.
- Table, fridges, and microwaves in staff rooms/kitchenettes may be used by staff only and should be spaced apart and should be cleaned after each use.
- Staff must wash their hands before and after using shared equipment, appliances, etc. Equipment must also be wiped down with approved disinfectant. Hand sanitizer should be available in each of the rooms.
- Use of a photocopy/work room should be limited to one person at any given time and high-touch parts of the machine need to be cleaned between each use by the user. Individual programs can make plastic wrap available to lay over the touch pad for use as a barrier to further decrease the risk of transmission. This should be removed after each use.
- Depending on the size of the room, the number of people may be increased, as long as physical distancing is achievable. Rooms should have a maximum occupancy sign posted and directions for cleansing high-touch surfaces of the photocopier. Whether occupancy is one or five, a sign should be posted to indicate this.
- Staff meetings will take place remotely regardless of the scenario under which we are operating, unless there is the opportunity to maintain full and complete physical distancing.
- For staff who do not work with students, where possible, limit the number of staff coming to work in person. Staff should advise Managers in advance if they are planning to come to work in person and a schedule of in-person and remote work identified.

Fleet Vehicles

- To limit the potential for the spread of COVID-19 before travelling, all PDSB employees are to consult with their manager regarding the necessity of travel and explore all feasible alternatives to travel such as telephone and video meetings. Where it is determined that employee travel is critical to the operation of the schools, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - ***Directly assigned vehicles***
 - Use disinfectant wipes or cleaning spray on all hard surfaces inside the vehicle (steering wheel, door and window handles, dash, controls etc.)
 - Use hand sanitizer each time you enter the vehicle (driver and passenger)
 - Spray high-touch areas with disinfectant spray often
 - ***Shared fleet vehicles and rental vehicles***
 - Sharing of vehicles should be avoided wherever possible.
 - If it is unavoidable then interior surfaces must be disinfected between uses or when the vehicle is transferred to another employee in accordance with Directly Assigned vehicle cleaning procedures.
 - Prior to returning the car complete the Vehicle Sanitization Checklist which can be found in the fleet vehicle bag.

- **Enhanced cleaning procedures**
 - If it has been determined that a vehicle has been occupied by an individual who is exhibiting symptoms of or has tested positive for COVID-19, the following procedures will be followed:
 - The vehicle will be placed out of service for a minimum three days after the last day used by a person who has developed symptoms or has been determined to have COVID-19.
 - A professional cleaning service will be used to provide a full, enhanced cleaning treatment before returning vehicle to service.
- **Physical distancing practices**
 - Program areas should limit occupancy within the vehicle to one person at any given time. This may be achieved by using multiple fleet vehicles if available or renting vehicles.
 - Consideration should also be given to allow an employee to use their personal vehicle so that single occupancy can be maintained. Employees must be aware that the ministry assumes no financial responsibility for personal vehicles and that they are responsible for arranging any necessary personal insurance coverage they may need for using their vehicle for business purposes. Employees should connect with their manager for pre-approval prior to proceeding with this option. Reimbursement of travel expenses require pre-approval as per the usual process.
 - If single occupancy is not possible, the Vehicle Occupancy Assessment Form must be completed and provided to your manager.
 - Where possible, use a larger vehicle to increase distancing between the driver and passenger and allows maximum separation. Seat the passenger in the back seat, farthest away from the driver.
 - Where no other control is available, appropriate PPE should be used.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings

Training will be provided to workers on the appropriate wear, care, and cleaning of PPE (e.g., surgical/procedure mask, eye protection, face shield). For instance, an individual should wash their hands before putting on or removing a surgical/procedure mask, only touch the mask by its straps, avoid touching the mask while it is being worn, and change masks if it becomes wet or soiled. Individuals should make sure the mask fits snugly to cover the nose, bridge, mouth, and chin). Signs identifying proper wear and care for masks should be posted throughout the building.

Staff

- All staff will be required to wear surgical/procedure masks, with reasonable exceptions for medical conditions. Staff will be provided with a medical face mask and a face shield to wear. All staff providing services to or in a shared space with students will be required to wear masks indoors.
- School-based staff who are regularly in close contact with students will be provided with all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and training for its proper use. This training will take place during the September PD Days before students arrive.

- Where necessary, such as in leading classes with students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, masks with clear sections may be appropriate. Clear medical grade face masks will be ordered for our staff to use in our schools for the Deaf.
- Students who have an increased stress response may be brought to the attention of the CSD who can support how to work closely with students without increasing student anxiety.
- School provided PPE will be centrally ordered for staff. PPE will be based on the individual roles within PDSB.
- PPE stockpiles will be managed by student health services and requests for additional PPE should go to Student Health Services (SHS) through the appropriate manager or principal.
- Refer to Appendix A which outlines the PPE provided based on roles. Reasonable exceptions will be made by the supervisor in collaboration with the staff member and Human Resources Services personnel.
- Staff will be expected to care for and maintain PPE provided. PPE is only provided for PDSB purposes. PDSB provided PPE must not be used outside of the PDSB school or work setting.

Pre-Authorized Visitors

Until further notice, to support the health, safety, and well-being of PDSB's students and staff, only two groups of persons, who must be pre-authorized to visit, will be permitted to visit a PDSB site:

- Persons who are considered “essential visitors” (i.e., a non-PDSB employee who performs essential services to support the ongoing operation of a school or residence, or is a person considered necessary to support or maintain the health, well-being, and safety of a student or staff member); essential visitors may visit PDSB schools and residences.
- Family members of students who are in residence; family members may only visit a PDSB residence.

All visitors are to adhere to proper respiratory etiquette, infection prevention and control measures (e.g., hand hygiene routines), and physical distancing measures in place at the school/residence.

In the event that a PDSB school or residence experiences an outbreak, all non-essential visits must be discontinued unless otherwise directed by a local public health unit.

Hand Hygiene

- Appropriate hand hygiene is one of the most important protective strategies. Nurses will be prepared to train students on appropriate hand hygiene, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub. If hands are visibly soiled hand washing should occur instead of using hand sanitizer. Reinforcing this procedure can involve scheduling breaks to allow students to wash their hands at appropriate times during the school day.
- Schools and residences will be required to establish a hand hygiene protocol for students and staff that will be scheduled at set intervals throughout the day. Students are to use soap, water, and paper towels or an alcohol based sanitizer. Handwashing should be built into the regular daily classroom/residence schedule.
 - Wash hands before: Leaving home/residence, leaving the classrooms, eating, touching high-use surfaces /objects shared between users, touching face, and leaving school.

- Wash hands after: Arriving at school, entering class, finishing lunch, touching high-use surfaces/objects shared between users, touching face, using the bathroom, coughing, sneezing, blowing nose, and arriving at home.
- Paper towels should be used wherever possible.
- Custodial staff will monitor soap, sanitizer, and paper towel supplies and alert their Administrator for any supplies that need to be replenished.
- Proper handwashing with warm water and soap is always recommended for visibly soiled. In the absence of this, conveniently located, hand sanitizer stations should be provided, or a pump/squeeze bottle of hand sanitizer located in direct proximity to the commonly used entrance/exit door.
- Hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol will be in all classrooms and used common areas, including classrooms that do not have a functioning sink with soap and running water. Hand washing/sanitizer supplies will be checked regularly and restocked as required.
- Hygiene notices (i.e., avoid touching your face, sneeze/cough etiquette and proper hand washing) will be posted as needed on site by Residence Managers in collaboration with school Principals.
- Open cuts should be covered completely with a bandaid.
- Handwashing facilities with soap and hand towels are provided to staff.
- Non-touch waste disposal receptacles are to be used wherever possible.
- Consistent with Public Health Ontario's [Checklist: COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Congregate Living Settings](#), laundering guidelines in PDSB residences are:
 - Handle laundry with minimal agitation.
 - Gloves are worn when handling dirty laundry if likely to touch items contaminated with blood or body fluid.
 - Gowns can be added if likely to contaminate your clothing. Handle laundry gently without shaking.
 - Regular laundry soap and hot water (60°C-90°C) are used for laundering.
 - Residents have their own clean bedding and towels, which are not shared.
 - Bedding and towels are washed on a regular schedule for residents who stay in the facility.
 - Change or launder bedding every week.
 - Change or launder bath towels after a maximum of three times use or earlier as needed.
 - When developmentally appropriate, students will be encouraged to launder their own items.

*NOTE: Signs for how to wash properly and when to wash should be posted at sinks and throughout the building.

Healthy Buildings

Ideally holding class outdoors provides the freshest air and most effective dilution of any infectious airborne COVID-19.

Healthy Buildings: Risk Reduction Strategies

- Increase outdoor air ventilation

- Filter indoor air
- Supplement with portable air cleaners
- Verify ventilation and filtration performance
- Consider advanced air quality techniques
- Use Plexiglas as a physical barrier
- Install no-contact infrastructure
- Keep surfaces clean
- Maintain cleaning standards and protocols

Increase Outdoor Air Ventilation

- Open windows to increase air flow whenever possible.
- The use of fans should be limited as they blow people's exhaled droplets to others.
 - Ceiling fans high up in the room (e.g., 25 feet up in a gym), are less of a concern than ceiling fans on low ceilings.
- Pedestal fans or high-powered fans on/near the floor should not be used as they generate strong air currents across people at head level (breathing zones) or across surfaces (possible resuspension of particles). This would be exacerbated if people working out cool off in front of the fan. Limit meeting students in offices and go to open areas, including outdoors.
- Move class outdoors whenever possible, weather permitting. Consider setting up your outdoor area to facilitate its use for outdoor classrooms. If using an outdoor space, remember to consider potential effects of weather, temperature, and seasonal allergy conditions on student comfort and well-being.

Main Office Areas

- Plexiglass protection (i.e., sneeze guards) will be installed in the main office and reception and possibly other areas as required.

Filter Indoor Air

- Increase the level of the air filtration to the highest level achievable based on system constraints or available based on product supply on recirculated air.
- Inspect air filters to make sure they are installed and fit correctly.
- Check that sufficient airflow can be maintained across the filter.
- Maintain and change filters based on manufacturer's recommendation.

Verify ventilation and filtration performance

- Verify through commissioning and testing.
- Work with an expert to evaluate building systems, ventilation, filtration, and air cleaning.
- Implement expert recommendations to improve indoor air quality where feasible.

Consider advanced air quality techniques

- Attempt to maintain indoor relative humidity between 40-60%, where possible.
- Install no-contact infrastructure.
- Adjust use of existing infrastructure to make it touchless.
- Install touchless technology for dispensers of hand soap, hand sanitizer, and paper towels.

Bathroom Hygiene

- Keep bathroom doors and windows closed and run any exhaust fans at all times.
- Stagger bathroom use and post single occupancy signage.
- For isolation bathrooms and bedrooms, they should be disinfected between use.
- Appropriate PPE will be provided to custodial and maintenance staff employed by PDSB to safely clean any contaminated areas and they will be trained in proper disinfection protocols and safety practices during cleaning, and in best disinfection practices to prevent fomite transmission of COVID-19.
- Custodial staff in the employ of 3rd party service providers will be required to adhere to the PPE protocols for schools and are required to provide adequate training to their personnel.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning frequency (i.e., *Daily*: classroom desks, tables, and chairs, shared spaces, *multiple times per day*: door handles, light switches, handrails, sink handles, washroom surfaces, cafeteria surfaces, elevator buttons and *between uses*: toys, games, art supplies, instructional materials, keyboards, phones, printers, copy machines, seats on a bus).

Cleaning Protocols

All cleaning protocols should be fully accessible. Custodial Managers should review the cleaning protocols and reinforce them as needed:

- Refer to Public Health Ontario's [Environmental Cleaning fact sheet \(PDF\)](#).
- Refer to Health Canada's [Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\)](#) for approved products.

Cleaning products: Products that provide both cleaning and disinfection action are preferable due to ease of use (e.g., hydrogen peroxide products). Only use cleaning and disinfectant products that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Check the expiry date of the agents prior to use. These should be used according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Cleaning program: Custodial Managers should develop, in collaboration with Andy Virtue, Manager of Operations and Branch Infrastructure, a program for cleaning and disinfecting schools, including reviews of:

- existing practices to determine where enhancements might be made, including frequency and timing of cleaning and disinfection, areas to clean and/or disinfect, choice of cleaning products, child safety, staffing, signage, and PPE for cleaning staff.
- inventory to determine items to be stored, moved, or removed altogether to reduce handling or the challenges associated with cleaning them (e.g., porous or soft items such as stuffed toys, area rugs, fabric upholstered seating).

High touch surfaces: Cleaning plus disinfection twice daily is suggested at a minimum, however, more frequent cleaning and disinfection may be necessary, depending on the frequency of use and extent of soilage.

- Includes washrooms (e.g., toilet fixtures, faucets), eating areas (e.g., tables, sinks, countertops), doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, touch screens, push buttons, handrails, computers, photocopiers, sports equipment.
- This is aligned with the current guidance from Public Health Ontario:
 - [Public Health Ontario – COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#)
- Remove all items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, etc.) and store them in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
- Water fountain mouthpieces will be covered and cannot be used until further notice.

- Students will be asked to bring reusable water bottles, filled where possible, and to access bottle filling stations during the day for refills.

Outdoor surfaces: Routine cleaning of surfaces on playgrounds, including high touch surfaces made of plastic or metal requires soap and water but not disinfectant. Cleaning of wooden surfaces is not recommended.

Shared objects: Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or the objects should be frequently disinfected or cleaned between each use.

Supply of Cleaning Products

- Custodial staff are to regularly monitor their cleaning supplies. An inventory of cleaning supplies will be housed at a secured location on all sites. Sites can request cleaning supplies through a work order. The inventory will be monitored through Procurement Services and Facility Services.
- The process of ordering additional cleaning supplies will be managed centrally. Additional details on process will be shared prior to the start of school.
- Custodians will ensure ongoing top-up of hand washing and sanitizing supplies.
- Custodians will inform their Custodial Services Supervisor, well in advance, if hand washing, sanitizer, or cleaning supply stock begins to run low.
- It is recommended that each school be equipped with a list of cleaning products, hand sanitizer, and wipes that are being used to clean the facility. Staff/students will not be prohibited from bringing their own supplies, as long as it is one of the approved items on the list.
- Each cleaning product in use will require a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) onsite that is readily available for staff to review and will require product specific Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training and PPE required to use such products.

Healthy Policies

How a school operates significantly impacts the safety of its students and staff. This section outlines potential school policies to monitor and respond to potential COVID-19 cases and thus support the health of the entire school community. Diagnostic viral testing for those with symptoms or who have come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 is a critical strategy for slowing the spread of the virus and preventing major outbreaks in schools because it can help identify those with active infections who then need to self-isolate. Schools should identify locations where students, staff, and families can be tested nearby and provide that information to everyone ahead of time.

Risk Reduction Strategy

- Establish and reinforce a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility
- Form a COVID-19 response team and plan (i.e., JHSC)
- Prioritize staying home when sick
- Promote viral testing
- Support remote learning options
- De-densify school buildings
- Protect high-risk students and staff

Health, Safety and Shared Responsibility

- Have a person or team in charge of implementing and disseminating COVID-19 policies

- Create a dynamic fully accessible COVID-19 plan document that can be shared with students, parents, staff, and anyone accessing the facility.
- Principals and Residence Managers should gather seating plans (and any changes, ongoing), cohort lists (transportation, residence and school) and visitor log book information for the purpose of contact tracing to notify class groups if they may have been exposed. Follow this protocol for identification and notification.
- Identify a comfortable room where individuals who become ill can isolate for the rest of the school day until they can be picked up.
- For staff and students who able to work but are isolating, Managers should have a plan in place to ensure continuity in remote learning or work for sick individuals who are ill and cannot come to school in-person.
- Students and staff are asked to privately let their principal or manager know if they have symptoms or have been tested positive so that schools can communicate with local public health units as appropriate.
- All staff are asked to be vigilant about the health of students and notify the school nurse and manager immediately if a child is exhibiting symptoms in class.
- Care must be taken so as not to unnecessarily disclose student health status to other staff or students in accordance with privacy legislation.
- Viral testing is encouraged any time someone has symptoms, even if mild. PDSB will not conduct testing but we will provide information on where people can go for testing. Information on testing can be found [COVID-19 Assessment Centre Locations](#)
- PDSB will respond following the protocols identified in the Outbreak Playbook provided by the Ministry of Education

Voluntary Attendance

- To ensure students and families are supported and respected in making decisions that work best for them, in-person school attendance will be optional for the 2020/21 school year. If not attending in-person, students will be expected to attend school remotely and they will be assigned to the virtual school by the principal. Parents have been asked to complete a survey to inform the school of their intent to opt out of in-school learning or attend in person. Parents may opt out of in-school learning at any time. To opt back into in-person learning, parents will have to re-register their child by the deadline for each quarterly reintegration period (see the dates at the end of this section).
- Remote learning options will be available for all students on a full-time enhanced distant/remote learning basis with access to learning materials posted online to support both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities during the day. Students are to be provided with a daily schedule of subjects/courses for a 300-minute instructional day with opportunities for frequent, live contact with a teacher and expectations for synchronous learning as per [PPM 164](#). It is expected that learning will be based on overall expectations across all subjects/courses and grades.
 - Students who require a device will work with the school principal to have home access to a device and the necessary connectivity.
 - Schools will also work with home school boards to ensure that students have their necessary SEA equipment and that it can be set up to work on site at PDSB.
- Students could expect to have different teachers deliver the online course rather than their scheduled teacher at the student's home school.

- Exemptions from synchronous learning requirements may be requested consistent with the PDSB exemption process for synchronous learning. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) will be centrally adjudicated.
- Schedule changes may be necessary and will be determined on a case by case basis
- PDSB will wait-list students and families who do not pre-register for in-person or for remote learning by the quarterly registration due dates as noted below.
- These quarterly deadlines will be made publicly available through school newsletters.
- PDSB will offer these students and families remote learning until the next quarter when an appropriate class placement can be provided.
- This requirement will be in place for as long as public health circumstances require adapted delivery of education. Parents can opt to have their child return to in-school learning at quarterly intervals throughout the year:
 - September 1, 2020 (September 8 start)
 - November 2, 2020 (November 16 start)
 - January 25, 2021 (February 8 start)
 - April 12, 2021 (April 26 start)

Confirmation of Mode of Attendance Survey and Remote Learning Support

- A survey asking parents/guardians to confirm whether their child(ren) will be attending PDSB schools in-person or remote only was provided to parents/guardians in late August 2020.
- Students opting for remote learning for the 2020-21 school year, will be provided with the necessary supplies and support systems to support learning (identify roles for work/homework support, lessons, devices required, tech training, universal supports, and schedule for learning).
 - Students who require a device will work with the school principal to have home access to a device.
- Provide ongoing professional development to staff on how to facilitate remote learning using our approved tools (i.e., Google Suite) and how to use these tools for a blended approach in the classroom.
- Remote classes may be staffed with teachers who have workplace accommodations limiting their presence in a school. For students who are engaged in remote learning, attendance should be taken according to the school's daily protocol. Students should be provided with a daily schedule of subjects/courses according to a 5-hour instructional day with opportunities for frequent, live contact with a teacher and expectations for synchronous learning in keeping with PPM 164. It is expected that learning will be based on overall expectations across all subjects/courses and grades.
 - Online learning should be part of all 3 scenarios to develop student skills while in person and to facilitate smooth transitions between scenarios
- Remote learning options will be available for all students on a full-time enhanced distant/remote learning basis with access to learning materials posted online to support both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities during the day.

Contact Tracing

- Information like attendance reports (staff and students) and seating plan information for classrooms, buses, cohort lists, etc. will all be kept on hand for 30 calendar days so that they are readily available to share with Public Health for the purposes of contact tracing.
- Cohort maximum sizes apply only to school cohorts

- Conventional: elementary cohort of about 50 contacts in total and should mostly be in one physical space; secondary cohort of about 100 contacts in total and should be in no more than two physical classrooms over a 2 week period.
- Adapted: reduced number of elementary cohort direct/indirect contacts and students should mostly be in one physical space; reduced number of secondary cohort of direct/indirect contacts and students should be in no more than two physical classrooms over a 2 week period.

Attendance Procedures

- Contactless school attendance procedures and reporting attendance to the office should be developed by the Principal for each site. Paper attendance that gets picked up and distributed should be avoided. Residence to school reports should also be contactless. Principals and Residence Managers should develop a site-based protocol for reporting attendance.
- All attendance information must be entered into the Student Information System (i.e., Trillium) by 10:30am each day.
- For remote learners, attendance is taken based on daily participation in synchronous learning. Parents should still advise if their child will be away from learning.

School Programming and Community Use of Schools

- Community Use of Schools (and facility rentals) will not be available until further notice.
- Before and After School programs will continue. The Extended Day program in Demonstration schools will continue.
- Play structures are closed to the public. Cohorts can use a play structure but they are limited to the use of one cohort per day and physical distancing needs to be maintained. Maintenance will be in charge of daily cleaning of play structures.

Workplace Inspections

- Through the Joint Health and Safety Committees, workplace inspection teams will participate in a start-up inspection prior to the start of the school year that will include a checklist of COVID related measures. For example, a checklist could include:
 - General precautions – posters in place providing directions (hand washing, social distancing, screening, respiratory etiquette, etc.)
 - PPE/face covering requirements
 - Physical distancing measures in place
 - Hand hygiene – posters/stickers in place in washrooms and classroom sinks
 - Isolation room equipped with supplies:
 - Isolation Room/Cart Checklist
 - Eye protection (e.g., face shields)
 - Gloves (appropriate size availability for staff)
 - Gowns (disposable)
 - Medical masks
 - Alcohol-based hand rub (60% ethyl alcohol or higher)
 - Clean single-use towels (paper towels)
 - Appropriate disinfectant wipes
 - Clinical waste bins and waste bags
 - Linen bags
 - Collection container (if reusable equipment to be disinfected)
 - First aid kits are equipped with additional masks and gloves

Outbreak Management:

Outbreak management in PDSB schools will follow the Province's [Operational guidance: COVID-19 management in schools](#).

Outbreak management in residences will follow direction from local public health units. The following local public health units serve PDSB schools and residences:

- Halton Region Health Department
- Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit
- Brant County Health Unit
- London-Middlesex Health Unit

Isolation Rooms

- Students and staff who are unwell must be placed in dedicated Isolation rooms or when otherwise directed by the local public health unit. This space may be in Student Health Services and needs to include a private washroom for the student. Isolation rooms in residences will be primarily the student's own room; however, other isolation areas/rooms may be designated as required.
- Principals will select at least one room in each school as a designated isolation room and Residence Managers will select residence areas/rooms in residences.
- A trained member of the school or residence staff team will provide supervision to isolated students. PPE must be worn during the supervision and must include face shield, disposable medical mask, gloves, and gown.
- Each isolation room will be equipped with supplies and PPE, such as disposable medical masks, face shield, disposable gowns, gloves and hand sanitizer. Supplies will include lined waste receptacle, and disinfectant. The student/patient washroom sink should not be used as the hand hygiene sink.
- The isolation room will be deep cleaned after each use.
- The room must have an "Isolation" sign that can be posted while the room is in use.
- The selected isolation room(s) must not impede the timely provision of school first aid services.

Privacy of Students/Staff

- Any communication to individuals that may be impacted due to a positive or suspected COVID-19 case must be considered carefully. The extent of disclosure should be sufficient to inform those who may have been exposed, but also protect the privacy of the worker/student who has or potentially has a positive case of COVID-19. These obligations must be carefully balanced. Do not provide the name of the worker/student being tested, who is confirmed positive, or names of others being sent home from the workplace to self-isolate. It is best to communicate privately to those individuals who may have had close contact with the affected worker/student and refer generally to the areas in which the worker/student may have been present.

Emergency Procedures

- Emergency procedures including drills are being adapted as noted below:

- Fire drills – to ensure compliance schools and residence must continue with full fire alarms. Drills will proceed with the same schedule (schools – 3 in the fall and 3 in the spring and residence – 1 per month). Students and staff should leave as a cohort from each area leaving space in between each grouping. When the groups are at the assembly points space out between cohorts.
- Lockdown – practice with the normal drill. Acknowledge the date and time of the drill to allow everyone to be prepared and stay within their groupings.
- Tornado drills – teach and practice in class on where to go, what to do and expectations.
- Shelter in place/hold and secure - teach and practice in class on where to go, what to do and expectations.
- Bomb Threat - teach and practice in class on where to go, what to do and expectations.
- Localized emergency protocols.
- Any adjustment to first aid procedures are being researched and will be communicated as required to staff. Currently, the Heart and Stroke Foundation have provided the guidance related to CPR during the pandemic. Additional PPE will be added to first aid kits (masks and gloves).
- In a real emergency, life is dependent on performing the correct protocol/procedure. If evacuation is needed, it should be first and foremost to get away from the danger.

Staff/Student Accommodations

- Staff with underlying health conditions or who fall within the high-risk category will follow PDSB's current accommodation process.
 - Staff who may need a medical accommodation in the workplace are required to contact their manager/principal. The Principal/Manager will consult with Human Resource (HR). Teachers who are on a medical accommodation, preventing them from regular class instruction may be assigned to daily online instruction and check-ins with students.
- Parents/Guardians who do not want their child to attend school in-person will be permitted to learn from home. Distance learning will continue and be in line with the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education through PDSB's Virtual School set up.
- Teachers will run blended learning classrooms throughout both in-person scenarios to facilitate students who are isolating at home, to support student familiarity with accessing their learning online, and to support seamless transitions as we may move through different delivery scenarios throughout the year. PDSB's Learning Management System for the 2020-2021 school year will be Google Suite with Google Classroom – based on the almost unanimous recommendation of both staff and students in the PDSB Distance Learning survey results.
- High-risk students and staff are supported to have the tools and the access they need to engage in effective remote learning or work (this may require a shift in role to allow staff members to work while staying safe).
- In order to ensure that students with special education needs are supported as schools reopen, schools will need to consider additional planning and transition time for students with special education needs to support a smooth transition.
 - SHS is encouraged to provide parents with public health information and ask them to identify if their child is to be considered at-risk for complications if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 (i.e., identify if their child is immunocompromised or has underlying medical conditions). For students whose parents identify as medically at-risk, work with parents and the family doctor to complete a Plan of Care so that we can take the

necessary extra precautions if high-risk students or staff come to school. Families that wish to opt for distance learning will follow the Pre-Registration process. Alternatively, work with the family to set the student up for remote learning.

- In order to ensure that students with special education needs are supported as schools reopen, schools will need to consider additional planning and transition time for students with special education needs to support a smooth transition.
- A plan of care completed by the student's doctor and specifically related to COVID-19 will be required for those students who have underlying medical conditions and/or are at higher risk.
- Parents will complete a consent form acknowledging the risks of attending school and residence during this pandemic.

Funds

- Cash will not be accepted. Cheques or e-transfer will be used as an alternate means of depositing funds into student accounts.
- Fundraising activities are temporarily suspended.

Healthy Schedules

Throughout the school day, there are opportunities to reduce transmission risk. While students are in school, transition times can be limited and lunch can be modified to maintain physical and group distancing. Students and staff should be encouraged to not loiter in entrances, exit areas, or hallways, but if waiting is necessary, lines should be clearly marked to maintain physical distancing. In small hallways or stairwells, clearly marked paths on the floor that indicate one direction of travel could be used when possible. Additionally, different doors could be used by different classes or grades to enter and exit the school to minimize crowding and to reduce the number of people touching the same doors. Other recommendations about ways to reduce the number of transition times, such as by rotating teachers (instead of students) and serving lunch in the classroom, are also recommended. Schools and residences have created site-specific plans to address these issues.

Healthy Schedules: Risk Reduction Strategies

- Manage transition times and locations
- Make lunchtime safer
- Rethink transportation
- Modify attendance
- Pre-register students

Access to Schools, Residences, and Administrative Buildings

- Access to all sites will be limited to staff, students, and pre-authorized visitors only. They are also required to follow our health and safety protocols for entry to and presence in the buildings
- Visitors and volunteers to any PDSB site will be by appointment only. Wherever possible, telephone and video conference meeting with parents/guardians will be held.
- Wherever possible, all exterior doors will remain locked. Only the main entry is to be used by pre-authorized visitors. Alternative entries must have signs placed on the doors directing pre-authorized visitors to the main entry

- Mail and deliveries should be contactless.
- A table should be set up just inside the main entry for the rare case that a parent needs to drop off something for their child so that they can place it on the table and leave.

Sign In/Out Procedures

- All visitors, contractors, maintenance, central staff, itinerant staff, OTs/PTs, and anyone that is not a staff member or student of the school/residence must, in all cases, check in at reception to sign in and out. Visitors should be screened for symptoms. Swipe card access is not sufficient for sign in/out purposes. The same procedures will be in effect for all administrative and other PDSB buildings. Sign in must include, date, time, name, location/s in the building they are accessing, and reason.
- Casual staff will continue to be required to sign in prior to their assignment and sign out upon leaving.
- All persons who access the building and who are not regular staff and students of that building, must have permission, in advance, from their supervisor.
- Each sign in/out location should be equipped with pens and hand sanitizer.
- Supply staff can still be called in; their interactions should be extremely limited with lots of physical distancing. They need to attend our training in September on all of our Health and Safety measures. Student teachers may still be able to come. We are waiting to hear what universities decide about their programming.

Arrival/Departure Procedures

- Each Principal and/or Manager may need to alter/enhance entry/exit from the building to include physical distancing protocols. This may include beginning arrival/dismissal procedures earlier or scheduling/staggering order to assist with physical distancing. Avoiding lines and congestions at these times is a priority.
- Students are to enter and leave the school always by their designated door, including on inclement weather days (i.e., rain). They are to get on their bus and go directly to their assigned seats. Students may not change bus seats. New seating assignments can only be made by the manager. Managers will keep dated copies of all bus seating plans for the purpose of contact tracing.
- Staff and/or parents/guardians and students should avoid congregating and socializing in groups to adhere to physical distancing.
- Student pick up will take place outside. Parents/guardians should wait on the yard or near their parked car. They will not be allowed to enter the school to pick up their child. Clear communication with parents as to the time of pickup will be necessary.
- Stagger school arrival and departure times, class transitions, bathroom and handwashing schedules, etc.
- Set up separate entrances and exits for different groups of students when possible.
- Use well-marked lines on the floor to encourage physical distancing and indicate direction of travel.
- As staff enter the building they are required to sign in at the worksite in the log.
 - this log will be used for contact tracing purposes in the case of an outbreak or other direction from public health officials to provide such information.

Food, Cafeteria, Lunch, and Snacks

- Food services is an important integral part of the student life and well being in PDSB.
- In order to assure we use the best practices at all campuses, under the guidelines from all Public Health Authorities, and applying the best practices of Hazard Analysis critical Control Points (HACCP) – the following is set out to provide specifics on how to achieve safe food delivery to our students.
- The procedures and processes here will continue to evolve as circumstances continue to move forward and adjustments are put forward by Public Health Authorities.
- Changes from the past practices and routines are revised to the “new normal” under the present pandemic parameters.
- Food Services is a critical point where absolute control must take place to ensure that no harmful levels of bacteria enter the food chain.
- To achieve this, we must ensure processes and practices in addition to those presently in place (frequent hand washing, wearing of masks and PPE) are clearly communicated and understood.
- From the point of product delivery to the kitchens, proper handling and storage, preparation and holding must also ensure no entry of bacteria occurs through personal contact, or other known routes of entry. The kitchens are effectively closed to all outside persons other than the food services staff.
- The cafeterias will remain closed at all locations until further notice.

Flow of food:

- In order to ensure no cross-contamination can come back to the kitchens, there will be no foods brought back to the kitchen, even if packaged such as snacks or beverages.
- There is a one-way flow out of the kitchen, any remaining foods should be discarded within two hours of delivery for consumption, without exception.
- Single use containers such as clam shell style containers will be used to provide individual meals, the quantity per meal item will be in excess of a standard serving amount to ensure there is enough food that a student will eat per meal.

Meal services:

- Meals will be brought by food services staff to a central agreed to area(s) in either bins or bread racks. Food service staff will remove food from bins/racks at drop off point. Specified staff with proper PPE and clean hands will reload food in residence specific bins/ racks and bring those meals to the student areas for distribution.
- The distribution of meals and the accompanying components (beverage, desserts, disposable utensils) will be given out by placing on a table for one student at a time, to be picked up (non-contact) by each student.
- All beverages will be single service, no bulk containers or jugs.
- All leftovers must be discarded, do not keep. Remove all discarded garbage from the rooms upon meal time conclusion. Place all containers of garbage in the designated area (outside the room) for housekeeping.
- Arrangements with housekeeping staff will be made to remove discarded meal items at the conclusion of each meal from a central point (usually a hallway space) will ensure prompt removal from all areas of waste and stop cross contamination or pests.
- If you are unsure of the number of students staying for a meal it is best to have extra within reason.
- Staff meals as per the collective agreement will be included.

Residence foods:

- The ongoing practice of ordering foods from the kitchen at each campus will remain the same.
- All communications are by phone/email to ensure no one goes into the kitchen, under any circumstance.
- Foods will be made ready and placed in the agreed to central pick up location. In order to ensure no spoilage occurs, the timing of placement must be followed by a prompt pick up and storage of all foods to avoid any potential for food-borne illness to occur, refrigerated and frozen foods cannot exceed 30 minutes out of proper cold storage and dry goods must not be exposed to moisture or contamination. We will not be sending milk in bulk containers to residence, single service will be the plan to ensure one item to one student – no sharing.
- Breakfast items need to ensure there is nothing shared.
- Students currently cannot do any cooking or use common items that may be shared such as the toasters. Residence baking or meal preparation for the group is not to occur in the current situation.
- Snacks will be individually wrapped, single service.

- **Foods that are delivered in reusable totes or bins:**
 - Remove all products and store as noted. Again, dispose of unused liquids by dumping down the drain and dispose of container in the garbage.
 - Containers are to be washed, rinsed, sanitized and dried and kept in residence for daily meal use.

- **Getting foods from kitchen buildings to other buildings:**
 - Foods are not to be put into someone's car to be moved, this is prohibited.
 - The best method is to select and book a Ministry van at each campus to share in deliveries building to building. This must be a designated vehicle booked every day and used for no other purpose.
 - Check with your Maintenance Manager since there are no trips being conducted, select a van that is in good shape, cleaned, sanitized and ensure that there is a way to place meals and any foods directly off the floor.
 - Suggestion: Bread racks from the food services can be used as they stack and can use bungee cords to secure together and from sliding around on corners, etc.
 - The bottom bread rack should be empty to provide a space of 6 inches from the floor to where foods are.
 - Keep these bread racks with the van and have all sanitized after each use.
 - Drivers need to be able to wipe the driver's area including the steering wheel, door handles, etc. before and after each use. In a clean and sanitized van this is a simple task to adapt as routine.

General Provisions:

- Prepackaged snacks/food the child can open on their own may be sent to school. Food sent to school should be kept with the child's belongings. For students in residence, food provided by the family should be stored in kitchen in sealed containers labeled with student's name. If refrigeration is required, food should be kept in an area designated for the child's cohort and should not be handled by other cohort staff or students. Residence staff will coordinate access to food and fridge and ensure that touch cleaning occurs before and after.

- Every student should bring their own full reusable water bottle. It can be refilled as needed at the water bottle station. Regular water fountains should be closed/water turned off. Wipe touch-points when finished.
- Students of all ages are to eat and drink in the classroom with their cohort to ensure chances of contact and transmission are minimized and maintain physical distancing whenever possible. No food or drink should be shared with others, including staff.
- Students should all face the same direction wherever possible.
- Breakfast and snack programs may continue to provide food to students; however, they must not allow family style meal service, and the children must not serve themselves. Food provided should be pre-packaged whenever possible. Schools are encouraged to work with their teams and providers on how these programs can best operate given the measures in place including providing the food/snacks in individual containers to limit the number of contacts made each day (these containers can be assembled by a volunteer or staff member and dropped off at classrooms to avoid student line ups and congestion in hallways). If required, volunteers can be used to purchase and drop off the breakfast/snack program food items (i.e., on the tables at the main entrance).
- Food provided by the family should be stored with the child's belongings. If refrigeration is required, food should be kept in an area designated for the child's cohort and should not be handled by other cohort staff. Lunches should be litterless whenever possible.
- PDSB does not encourage lunch deliveries. In situations where a student forgot their lunch, contactless delivery is available at the main entrance. The parent would be granted access to the main entry to place it on the school's table in the reception area and then they would immediately vacate the building. The student would be told by the main office to go and pick up their delivered lunch.
- Commercial Food services are to follow HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points guidelines) under the supervision of the Manager of Food Services or the service provider as appropriate.
- Lunch start/end times may need to be staggered to allow students and staff to wash hands before eating, without creating congestion in washrooms or handwashing stations.
- After lunch, surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected. Principals will need to schedule this work with the cleaning staff. If weather permits, consideration could be given to having lunch breaks outside being mindful of bees etc. at certain times of year
- Lunch will not be available for purchase for staff or students. For students in residence, school-provided meals will be packaged in single-serving containers instead of serving food buffet-style.
- Reinforce "no sharing" of food, utensils, condiments, drinks.
- Physical distancing should be encouraged for staff and students.

*NOTE: With respect to eating and drinking at school, it is expected that:

- Staff and students will perform proper hand hygiene before and after eating.
- Each student will have their own individual meal or snack with no common food items.
- Each student will be required to bring their own drink bottle that is labeled, kept with them during the day and not shared. Water bottles will be required to be filled rather than students and staff drinking directly from the mouthpiece of water fountains.
- Schools will remove all self-serving food items and microwave for student use will not be permitted at this time.
- Multi-use utensils will be cleaned after each use.

- Schools and residences will not plan activities that involve students in preparing or serving of food.
- Third party food services, including nutrition programs, will be delivered in a way that any student who wishes to participate can do so. "Grab and Go format" is preferred. All surfaces, bins and containers for food should be disinfected prior to and after each use.
- Any questions or inquiries should be directed to: Murray Black, Manager, Food Services, PDSB. 905 878-2851, ext. 250.

Movement in Schools

- If possible, staff/students should use stairs while in the building. If elevator use is necessary, staff should ride alone. When students are required to use the elevator, appropriate supervision is maintained. As physical distancing will not be possible while supervising a student in an elevator, staff should wear appropriate PPE.
- Staircases will be evaluated by Managers to determine if two-way traffic can be achieved while still maintaining physical distancing. Schools and residences may have to develop and enforce traffic plans to support one-way traffic in the stairwell. Signage and marking should be posted to support these traffic plans.
- Similar to staircases, traffic flow through building hallways will need to be assessed to determine if physical distancing can be achieved. In most cases, hallways will be wide enough to allow for division of direction. Visual or other reminders (based on student need) may need to be placed to assist students with this.
- Lockers should not be used. Lockers create congregation and cohort issues and an inability to maintain physical distancing in hallway traffic flow. The disinfection burden involved in student use of lockers under our enhanced cleaning protocols is also a key issue in the decision to not allow locker access. Custodial staff cannot have locker disinfection added to their enhanced cleaning regimen and schools will need to look at other management tools within the classroom for student belongings.
- Student personal belongings should not come into contact with each other and should not be stored in locations that will cause congestion or limit physical distancing. It is recommended that students keep their belongings in a back pack that is stored on the back of the student's chair. Coats, outdoor shoes, etc. will require careful storage planning at each site to ensure that students are able to maintain physical distancing when accessing their belongings.

Transportation

- All bus drivers will be provided with PPE sourced through PDSB via MGCS supply chain. Bus drivers will be required to wear a face mask, while inside the bus and a face shield while students are boarding and de-boarding the bus. Reasonable exceptions will apply. Medical masks and eye protection (i.e., face shields) will be provided for school bus drivers, school bus monitors and student aides by the bus companies. Eye protection for drivers should not interfere with the safe operation of vehicles and is intended to protect drivers during close contact with students, such as during boarding and exiting.
- The school bus is not counted as part of the school or residence cohort for the purposes of COVID-19 distancing.
- Windows should be open (even just a bit in bad weather) always and physical distancing is maintained wherever possible. Students will need to dress appropriately while on the school

bus, because windows should be cracked open. Keeping the window open should be weighed against student comfort.

- Students will be required to wear face coverings consistent with school requirements, that is:
 - All students from Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear face coverings (non-medical masks). Reasonable exceptions will apply. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged to wear face coverings.
 - Exceptions will be made for students consistent with any exceptions granted for when the student is in a PDSB school/residence.
 - Students are also encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer should they feel the need to use it during travel.
- Set-up assigned seating plans that place students from a cohort in a section, and/or place siblings together in the same seat and maximize physical distancing as much as possible. Students will only be allowed to sit in their assigned seat and may not move around. The seating plan will assist local public health units to contact trace individuals who may have been exposed to the illness in the event that a case is confirmed. To support return to school five days a week, PDSB may be required to increase the utilization of buses beyond one student per seat and operate closer to capacity.
- In the event of the “Adapted Model” all attempts will be made to social distance students on their mode of travel (cars, buses, coach buses, aircraft), to the extent possible.
- In the event of an adapted return, cohorts will be determined for busses, based on geographic location. All attempts will be made to social distance on all modes of travel and PDSB will attempt to have one child per seat except when the need arises to have two students sitting together.
- Buses will have high touch surfaces (e.g., handrails and seats) disinfected twice daily by a product which carries a DIN and is confirmed to be effective against COVID-19. Hand sanitizer will be also made available on each school purpose vehicle.
- Illness kits will be available on all school buses which will be equipped with additional masks in the event that a student becomes ill on the bus. Students who show signs of illness while on the bus will be isolated, where space allows.
- Residence students are encouraged only to bring items to and from school which are absolutely necessary and should restrict their luggage to one standard suitcase per week.
- Classroom Assistants, Nurses and other staff involved in assisting in the boarding and deboarding of students and guides that are required to travel with students, will follow health and safety protocols and use the mandatory PPE provided.
- School start times may need to be modified as needed based on transportation schedules.
- Bus drivers will take daily attendance and provide a copy to their manager and to the school. School staff will record the disembark time and bus number of each student along with the embark time and bus number.
- Encourage use of personal vehicles (or walking, biking if close enough).
- Residence Managers should keep records up-to-date of any changes to seating plans, and a record of the seating plans by date should be kept to assist with contact tracing in the case of a student or driver contracting COVID-19.
- Students who live in the same household or are in the same classroom cohort should be seated together, if required.
- Residence Managers or Principals may take steps to ensure compliance with the seating plans for the purpose of contact tracing

- John Grochot, Transportation Coordinator will work with managers to establish a seating plan for all modes of transportation.
- Where possible, the seat directly behind the school bus driver should remain empty to maintain physical distancing.
- Residence Managers and/or Principals should work with the Transportation Coordinator, John Grochot and School Transportation Departments to support accommodations for immunocompromised and otherwise medically vulnerable students, and students with special transportation needs (e.g., arrange separate vehicle, assign seating at front of school bus) and to share what the operator needs to know from the transportation portion of a Plan of Care.
 - SHS will develop feasible accommodation plans as part of the Plan of Care for immunocompromised and otherwise medically vulnerable students in conjunction with the school principal and with the approval of the school’s superintendent for students requiring special transportation needs.
- Training, where appropriate, to support school bus drivers, school bus monitors, and student aides should be provided to ensure that health and safety measures are understood, followed and enforced.
- Health and safety measures should be clearly communicated to parents and guardians of students to ensure their comfort with the adapted transportation system and receive their support in having students understand and follow guidelines.
- Student transportation service providers should also consider the [Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 for Student Transportation Employers](#) released by the Public Services Health and Safety Association.

More resources:

[Federal Guidance for School Bus Operations](#)

- In our Adapted Scenario, PDSB will reduce the number of residence students in each mode of transportation (vans, coach buses, aircraft) to allow for physical distancing and residence students will attend every other week.

School Council and Other Parent Meetings

- Until further notice, School Council meetings will be held virtually.
- Day 1 Parent Orientation sessions will be conducted virtually.
- Parent-teacher conferences will be moved online.

Healthy Activities

Schools are an avenue for participation in a number of activities outside of the traditional classroom environment. As much as possible, these activities should continue to be provided to students to support engagement, health, mental well-being, and development. Schools can allow use of shared portable equipment (e.g., balls, wheeled toys) as play with portable equipment promotes physical activity and allows children to practice motor and social skills. Shared equipment can be disinfected between each class/cohort, and students should wash hands after using shared equipment. Schools may also allow children to “sign out” pieces of equipment and clean each piece between use.

When possible, schools could consider how to modify games/activities to promote safe play. For example, the game “tag” could be replaced with “shadow tag,” in which children step on each other’s shadows instead of touching each other directly.

Recess should not be substituted for physical education class as they each have unique benefits. When designing physical education lesson plans, schools could choose activities that limit the amount of shared equipment (e.g., children rotate through stations and equipment is cleaned before/after each use) and contact between students (e.g., children have their own pool noodle to tag others with instead of their hands and to remember to keep distance).

As some children may be less physically fit due to limited participation in activities over the previous months, schools could apply progressive overload to allow for safe, gradual increases in workload.

Physical distancing, washing hands, and healthy building strategies are particularly important during indoor physical education due to increased breathing rates of students.

Most overall expectations for the Music strand can be met without the use of instruments in both the elementary and secondary Arts curriculum. For music and drama classes, instruments that do not involve blowing air from the mouth, such as percussion or strings instruments, could be used instead of higher-risk woodwind instruments, which have the potential for spread of aerosols and droplets. Singing and voice projection are also higher-risk activities that carry a risk of viral transmission through aerosols and droplets. As such, singing is not allowed unless done behind a full plexiglass shield (even if outside). In-class instruction in these higher-risk activities can be replaced with outdoor practice (weather permitting), music theory, theatre history, or vocal anatomy lessons. Another option is to continue online instruction for certain instruments, choirs, or ensembles, or practice outdoors in smaller, well-spaced groups.

Risk Reduction Strategy:

- Provide outdoor breaks for students (i.e., recess)
- Modify physical education
- Reimagine music and drama classes
- Continue sports and clubs with enhanced controls
- Add structure to free time

Outdoor Breaks

- Do not limit children’s access to outdoor recess..
- Wash or sanitize hands before and after recess or using high-touch equipment.
- Increase supervision to limit high-risk behaviours. This could be achieved by staggering recess times.
- Separate cohorts by schoolyard area. A cohort should not come into proximity of another cohort at any time, including recess.
- Parents should be advised to send their children to school prepared to spend extended periods outside for both recess and learning.
- All PDSB students will be required to stay on property for the purpose of maintaining cohorts and accurate contact tracing.

Structured Free Time

- Establish occupancy limits and clear physical distancing guidelines and signage in all common spaces (i.e., library, cafeteria, residence common areas, staff rooms, etc.)
- Encourage students to remain outside when not in class.
- Replace unstructured time with supervised study halls, if feasible. Study halls can take place outdoors, weather permitting.

Field Trips and Excursions

- Field trips, excursions, and activities requiring group transportation will not be offered.

Clubs and Sports

- Schools may offer clubs and organized sports if physical distancing is possible and equipment and spaces are cleaned and disinfected between each use.

English Language Learners

- Ensure families' understanding of all communications, new protocols, and safety measures.
- Ensure parents and students are familiar with their rights and obligations and opportunity for support and accessibility.
- Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) should continue to provide assessments and orientation of newcomers in August and September.
- Diagnostics should be done early to determine gaps and remediation to mitigate loss of English language.
- Provide access to technology, training in use of the technology for students and parents.
- Provide over the phone interpretation services and communications in translations.

Science/Physical Education/Music/Co-op/Shop Tech Areas

- Science, music, shop, tech and Physical Education teachers will implement ongoing disinfection protocols of high-touch areas within the classroom and will educate, direct, and supervise students to ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection of PPE, equipment, supplies, and tools before and after use.
- In elementary and applicable secondary Health and Physical Education courses, efforts should be made to address the overall expectations of the Active Living and Movement Competence strands outside, where possible.
- Postpone contact sports and team sports that do not meet physical distancing guidelines.
- Educators will request/obtain additional disinfectant and paper towels from custodial staff as required.
- Move activities outdoors when possible.
- Any shared objects need to be disinfected by users

*NOTE: Principal will oversee plans for Music/Phys Ed etc. to ensure they meet public health safety requirements.

Science/Tech/Shop

- Cleanse hand tools and equipment that staff and students touch.
- Ensure that cohorts are designed to meet all physical distancing practices

Co-op

- Co-op placements may be offered virtually, where feasible.
- In-person community placements can be arranged in alignment with the direction and recommendations of the local health unit, the direction of PDSB, and with the safety and curriculum requirements of the Cooperative Education curriculum.
- Cooperative education is a key component of Specialist High Skills Majors, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and Dual Credit Programs.

Dual Credit and Specialist High Skills Major

- Dual credit programs/courses will still be offered to the best of our ability.
- Certifications for Specialist High Skills Major can proceed but some may be held virtually.

Music and Drama

Most overall expectations for the Music strand can be met without the use of instruments in both the elementary and secondary Arts curriculum.

A variety of delivery options may be considered to meet the music curriculum's overall expectations, which could include fully distanced learning, in-person teaching and instruction with lower-risk creative performance opportunities (e.g., in-school instruction in larger spaces, restricting the type of instruments in a group setting) or in-person teaching and instruction with no live performance.

Boards may choose to refer to the [Ontario Music Educators' Association](#) resource for suggestions on teaching music in line with current public health recommendations.

Health, Fitness, Pools & Physical Education

- Hold physical education classes outdoors whenever possible. Gymnasiums should only be used where physical distancing measures can be followed.
- Modify activities to limit the amount of shared equipment. Any shared equipment should be approved by the Principal inline with public health and safety guidelines and must be disinfected regularly.
- Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use.
- Pools and fitness equipment will be closed.
- Changerooms will be limited to no more than four people at a time.
- Choose activities that limit close contact over those with a high degree of personal interaction.
- Refer to the [OPHEA tips](#) for COVID-19.

Itinerant teachers: (i.e., Oral Language teachers, etc.) can be included in a cohort. If this is not possible to schedule, consideration should be given to providing Oral Language instruction remotely.

- Supervisory staff will limit, where possible, the number of contacts for itinerant staff.
- Itinerant staff will follow hand hygiene, physical distancing, PPEs, and other health and safety protocols as appropriate when entering a new classroom.
- Principals and SERTs will share PDSB protocols with community partners to develop safe processes for school access by regulated health professionals, regulated social service professionals and paraprofessionals (i.e., OT, or PT).

- Protocols will also be shared for students who may only be able to continue with distance learning delivery.

Computer Labs and Student Devices

- Computer labs will be open for minimal structured use by students. In the case that staff require the use of a computer for delivering remote learning, they can be directly assigned by the school to one of these computers and will need to make sure that they wipe it down before and after each use with an approved disinfectant cloth. These desktop computers would also need to be rearranged to allow for appropriate physical distancing if more than one staff member needed this provision. Schools should also track the usage of computer labs identifying staff name, computer used, date and time.
- Students are allowed to bring in their own personal device (e.g., laptops, chromebooks) for educational activities within the classroom. Students with personal devices are only to use the PDSB Student WIFI.
- Students should work with directly assigned technology whenever possible. For example, SEA equipment and the equipment they used during the closure period. They should continue to have this equipment assigned to them. Schools who donated the equipment to students last year will have gaps filled with new stock.
- Refer to Ontario Council for Technology Education’s website for suggestions on teaching technological education in line with current public health recommendations and in virtual environments.

Assemblies, Recess, and Outdoor Play Structures

- Students should be scheduled for recess within their cohort in a certain section of the yard. Scheduling a class-by-class dismissal to recess and entry back into the school is recommended to avoid line ups and congestion. Physical distancing should be maintained while in lines.
- One cohort can play on an outdoor play structure each day.
- In-person assemblies are not permitted indoors. They can take place outdoors if appropriate physical distancing and cohorting can be maintained.

Library/Learning Commons

- Not utilized at this time unless for larger classes for physical distancing.
- Library professionals should provide library services virtually and establish processes for delivering books and other loaned materials in a contactless manner, including for students who will be participating in remote learning.
- Disinfect and sanitize resources that are used and returned.
- Library staff may visit classrooms virtually or in person, on a scheduled basis, to enhance learning and offer resources for learning (e.g., read aloud, research support etc.).
- Consider creating a “library on a cart” with resources to be shared weekly with classes, disinfected at the end of the week, and create a new one for the next week for another class.

References:

- Principal Connections, Summer 2020
- Leading with Hope: A Reflective Guide for Catholic Schools in a New Reality
- School Resumption FAQ and Handbook, from OCSOA
- Edu-Covid 20-21Reentry Plan (Alberta);

- Sick Kids Recommendations;
- Forging a Path Forward (How to Design a Responsive Return Plan);
- <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/reopening-school-what-it-might-look-like/>
- <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/24/842528906/what-it-might-look-like-to-safely-reopen-schools>;
- https://www.weareteachers.com/denmark-reopening-schools/#.XqTQ2p_u7xg.email;
- <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/55838/seven-distance-learning-priorities-to-consider-before-reopening-schools>;
- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-ready-teach-next-year>;
- Ontario Art Education Association, June 22, 2020
- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/distance-learning-strategies-bring-back-classroom>;
- [Approach to Reopening Schools for the 2020-21 School Year](#);
- Teaching Music Class – OMEA;
- <https://schools.forhealth.org/risk-reduction-strategies-for-reopening-schools/> - Harvard School of Public Health
- Knowing the Learner Cards (Edugains);
- <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/9-ways-online-teaching/>
- <https://littlelearningcorner.com/2020/06/20-tips-to-prepare-kids-for-kindergarten-during-covid.html>;
- Ministry of Education Guidance Document, July 30, 2020;
- Physical & Health Education (PHE) Canada’s resource or the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (Ophea) website;
- Ontario Council for Technology Education’s website;
- <https://georgecouros.ca/blog/archives/11801>

Appendix A - Public Hands-Only CPR

Public Hands – Only CPR* during the Covid-19 pandemic. Four steps you can handle.

1. *Transcriber’s Note: Picture of a cell phone*

Phone 911 and shout for an AED

Don’t delay – ACT!

If no one is around, use your mobile phone on speaker mode to call 9-1-1.

Tell them if COVID-19 is suspected.

2. *Transcriber’s Note: Picture of a paper towel roll with a + sign*

Prevent contamination by laying a cloth, or clothing over the mouth and nose.

This will help prevent any potential spread of the virus through contaminated air or saliva.

3. *Transcriber’s Note: Picture of a person performing chest compressions (CPR) onto a vertical person*

Push hard and fast in the centre of the chest.

Think of the beat of *Staying Alive* or about 100-120 beats per minute.

Don’t stop until help arrives or the person begins to respond.

4. *Transcriber’s Note: Picture of a red heart with a lightning bolt in the middle*

Use an AED if available.

AEDs are safe and simple to use. Turn it on and follow the voice instructions.

After providing hands-only CPR

Wash or throw away the cloth, towel or clothing used to cover the person’s face.

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. An alcohol-based hand gel is an alternative.

If you see someone suddenly collapse, or if they’re unresponsive, you can save their life using your phone, your hands and your wits. Don’t hesitate – you can’t hurt, you can only help.

heartandstroke.ca/cpr

Transcriber’s Note: Heart and Stroke logo (Heart & Stroke)

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