

Parent's Guide: Back to School Fall 2021

To keep students and staff as safe as possible, safety measures were developed in partnership with Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health. Schools are permitted to open for in person-learning with health and safety measures in place for the school year.

- **Elementary schools** – children will be in cohorts, which means they will be with the same group of children and have one teacher. Programming such as physical education or French will also be provided to students in cohorts.
- **Secondary schools** – school boards will ensure student schedules are limited to two in-person classes. There are exceptions for schools where contact can be limited by cohorting grades or if the overall size of the school is small, making contact tracing manageable.

Note: remote learning will remain an option for students and families.

Here are some of the measures that will be in place to keep kids safe at school

- **Provincewide ventilation improvements:**
 - ◆ School boards to continue optimizing air quality in schools through improvements to ventilation and/or filtration. This includes measures such as running systems longer, using the highest-grade filters and deploying standalone HEPA filter units.
 - ◆ School boards to place a standalone HEPA filter unit in junior and senior kindergarten classrooms as an additional health and safety measure.

- **Enhanced cleaning** of schools and high-touch surfaces.
- **Wearing a mask:**
 - ◆ Students in Grades 1 to 12 must wear properly fitted masks indoors in school and on school transportation.
 - ◆ Students in Kindergarten are encouraged to wear a mask or face covering.
 - ◆ School staff and school bus drivers must wear medical masks.
- Students and staff must **screen for COVID-19 symptoms every day.**
- **Extra-curricular activities will be allowed** with some modifications.
- **Students can share materials** during recess, in shared spaces and indoors with appropriate physical distancing.
- **Shared spaces will be allowed**, for example homerooms, libraries, tech labs and cafeterias, when they follow indoor gathering measures.
- Regular **hand washing** or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

We will continue to work with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and local public health units to assess key measures to inform and update guidance. Additional health and safety measures may be required for some public health units based on local public health data. Please note that the plan may be adjusted based on key public health and health care indicators, such as vaccination rates.