This September, all elementary and secondary schools in Huron and Perth counties will open for conventional in-person delivery of teaching and instruction, five days a week. Parents will also have the option to select online learning as an alternative to face to face.

When students return to in-person classes there are health measures that everyone has to follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and help stay safe.

While your school is developing a plan to meet the government’s health recommendations, everyone will have a role to play to keep school open and to protect the health and safety of all individuals in the community.

Click here to read the Ministry of Education’s Guide to Reopening Ontario’s Schools.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:
- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- Cough (new or worsening)
- Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing

Other symptoms of COVID-19 can include:
- Chills
- Barking cough (croup)
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Lost sense of taste or smell
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Headache (unusual or long-lasting)
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Muscle aches (unusual or long-lasting)
- Extreme tiredness
- Falling down often
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion – that is not related to an underlying condition or reason for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies, post nasal drip, etc.

For students with pre-existing or underlying medical conditions or risk factors, parents/guardians should consult a physician to help make a decision about returning to in person classes. Students with chronic symptoms may be asked to provide the principal with a note from their physician confirming the child has an underlying condition. Staff will receive training and will continually educate students about COVID-19 symptoms and prevention strategies.
STAY HOME IF FEELING UNWELL - DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL

- Parents/guardians must screen each child under 18 for any of the above mentioned symptoms of COVID-19 every morning before sending them to school. A self-screening tool will be shared with families/students/staff.
- Students 18 and older must self-screen every morning before coming to school.
- Board employees must self-screen every day before coming to work.
- Staff and students must stay home if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 or are not feeling well.
- Staff with symptoms and parents/guardians of children with symptoms should be directed to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions.
- If you have questions, check Huron Perth Public Health’s website at www.hpph.ca or call Healthline at 1-888-221-2133 ext. 3267.
- Stay home if in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is currently sick with new COVID-19 symptoms.
- Stay home if travel outside Canada has occurred within the past 14 days.
- Stay home if in close contact with someone who travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days with new COVID-19 symptoms.
- Call the school to report the students absence and reason as part of the Safe Schools arrival procedures.

TRANSPORTATION

- Families will be required to indicate if their child(ren) will be taking the bus during pre-registration in August, based on meeting the criteria for transportation.
- Active forms of travel (e.g., walking and cycling) and private transportation by parents/caregivers, are encouraged where possible, to ease pressure on transportation demand.
- Medical masks and eye protection (i.e. face shields) will be provided for school bus drivers, school bus monitors and student aides.
- Students will be required to use hand sanitizer when boarding the school bus.
- Students in grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear a mask (unless exempt). Students in grades K to 3 will be encouraged but not required to wear masks.
- Students will be assigned a seat. Students must stay in their assigned seat on the bus for contact tracing purposes.
- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected two times per day and after each use.
RESTRICTED ACCESS

- Parent/guardian and visitor access will be significantly limited.
- Doors will be locked between bell times for both elementary and secondary schools.
- Please call to make an appointment to enter a school.
- Drop-off/pick-up zones - Designated areas will be communicated for dropping off or picking up students, packages etc.
- All visitors entering the school/site will be required to self-screen for COVID-19 prior to entry, must sign-in and wear a mask or face covering.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

“Distancing” refers to the advice that individuals should avoid close personal contact and maintain 2 meters of separation for any prolonged encounters. While this will not always be possible, students will also be in cohorts (details below) to ensure safety is maintained.

Stay 2 Metres (6 feet) Apart

- During arrival and dismissal times and any other time on school property it is essential that all individuals keep a distance between others when possible and not congregate in groups.
- Desks will be set up to allow for as much distance as possible between each student.
- Common areas, such as cafeterias and libraries, will be set up to support physical distancing.
- Designated entrances/exits - Students may be assigned designated entrances and exits for arrival and dismissal.
- Keep right - when travelling corridors and stairs stay to the right while keeping 2 metres apart. Signs and markings will be posted.
- Be patient - some areas will have occupancy limits posted such as offices and washrooms.
COHORTING

Cohorting refers to the practice of keeping students together in a small group throughout their school day, with limited exposure to multiple teachers or a wide variety of classmates.

- Since we have been directed to implement a conventional model (i.e. face to face learning), our class sizes remain the same as in other school years.
- The majority of primary classes are capped at 20 students, junior and intermediate will be kept at 30 students or below, and high school class sizes will range from 8 (specialty classes) to 35 students. These class sizes follow Ministry guidelines and local collective agreement requirements.
- Classroom sizes in our schools vary in size, and in order to accommodate the return of students, we will be removing unnecessary furniture and locating larger classes into larger school spaces, including gyms and libraries.
- Students will be assigned a desk or designated work space and will not switch with another student. This will be helpful for contact tracing purposes and safety measures.

**Elementary students:**
- Students will stay together and move together in one cohort (group) throughout the day including nutrition breaks and recess. Students will be able to leave their classrooms to receive additional supports but direct and indirect contacts in schools for students will be limited to 50.
- Specialized teachers, like French, arts, and music, will still be able to go into classrooms to provide programming while wearing their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- To maintain distance between students, cohorts will have staggered nutrition breaks, recesses, and transitions.

**Secondary students:**
- Students in secondary schools will have contact with no more than 100 other contacts. As a result, we are re-timetabling the scheduling of our secondary courses. This will impact when courses are offered, not what courses are offered.
- To maintain physical distance between students, cohorts will have breaks and lunches together.

WEAR A MASK

- Students in Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoors, including in hallways and during classes, and when riding on school buses.
- Exceptions will be made for students with sensory and/or medical needs who are exempt from this requirement.
- Students will be allowed to remove their mask when outdoors when with their cohorts and while eating or drinking.
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged but not required to wear masks indoors, and when riding on school buses.
- Students may wear their own non-medical masks, and non-medical masks will also be made available.
- Staff will be provided with medical masks and face shields.
- All visitors will be required to wear a mask while inside the school. Reasonable exceptions (i.e., medical condition) are expected and will be determined on an individual basis.

### HAND HYGIENE & RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

- Students, staff and visitors will be required to wash their hands as soon as they arrive in the school and frequently throughout the day. Breaks will be built in for this purpose.
- Handwashing and hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the school and checked regularly.
- Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing into a tissue or one’s elbow) will be encouraged.

### CLEANING & DISINFECTION

- All high touch surfaces (door handles, railings, washrooms, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day.
- Items that cannot be easily disinfected (e.g., carpets, plush toys, etc.) have been removed and only essential items will be permitted.
- Shared learning materials and tools will be limited - each student will have their own supplies.
- Any shared items will be cleaned/disinfected between uses.
- Playground structures will be cleaned/disinfected regularly.
- Parents can help by minimizing personal belongings sent to school, labelling any belongings and remind students they must not be shared.

### VENTILATION

- Staff will be encouraged to open windows when possible, and take their classes outdoors.
- We will also prop open interior doors so as to increase air flow.
### NUTRITION

**Elementary**
- Nutritional breaks will take place in the classroom at the students’ assigned desk or outdoors. No sharing of food or beverages.

**Secondary**
- Nutritional breaks will take place in assigned common areas with physical distancing measures in place.
- We are working with our cafeteria operators to determine what food service models can look like. More information will follow.
- The mouthpieces on drinking fountains have been taken out of service. Students are encouraged to bring refillable containers labelled with their name.

### SYMPTOMS/ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

**Tell staff if feeling sick at school**
- If a student demonstrates symptoms of COVID-19 or becomes ill during school they will be immediately removed from their class and accompanied to a designated room.
- Staff will be required to put on personal protective equipment and the student will be asked to wear their mask as tolerated.
- The parent/guardian or emergency contact will be notified to come pick-up the student immediately. Please ensure the school has the most up-to-date contact information. Your contact information may also be used by Huron Perth Public Health for contact tracing.
- The designated room and any materials or areas used by the student will be cleaned and disinfected.

### COVID-19 CASE MANAGEMENT

- When Huron Perth Public Health receives a report of a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, staff immediately begin to conduct thorough contact tracing related to the case. The investigation includes contacting each person identified as being at risk of exposure.
- A COVID-19 case will not automatically lead to school closure. It could be that only a small group of students and staff who came in close contact may be required to self-isolate at home.
- Only close contacts of a confirmed case will be notified.
- More information about illness and outbreak protocols will be provided to school boards and shared.
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<th>MENTAL HEALTH &amp; WELL-BEING</th>
<th>STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS</th>
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| ● Educators will incorporate academic accommodations and supports for students who may be having difficulty concentrating or learning new information due to stress associated with the pandemic.  
● The Mental Health and Well-Being Team will provide in-person services to students.  
● In order to ensure that students with special education needs are supported as schools reopen, we will be providing additional planning and transition time for students with special education needs to support a smooth transition.  
● Transition plans will be developed and implemented collaboratively with parents/guardians to the greatest extent possible.  
● We will be making changes to the school environment and/or remote learning needs when reviewing and updating Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and will ensure continued access to assistive technology.  
● The safe return of medically fragile students will be supported by Huron Perth Public Health (if needed) on options for personal protective equipment, staff training, and potential continued remote learning where return is not possible. Students and parents/guardians should also consult with their health care providers, and provide the necessary information to the school so Individual Medical Management Plans can be updated.  
● We will work with partners to develop local protocols for school access by regulated health professionals, regulated social service professionals and paraprofessionals for the purpose of delivering school-based supports and services. Protocols will include support for remote delivery where in-school delivery is not possible. |
● As we receive more information, we will continue to share details through school messenger (email), our website (amdsb.ca), newsletters, student handbooks and social media.

● Communication regarding Transportation will be coordinated jointly by Huron Perth Student Transportation Services, AMDSB and the HPCDSB.

● As further details and information becomes available, communication will be updated.

● For more information, please go to:
  ○ Avon Maitland District School Board
  ○ Twitter
  ○ Facebook
  ○ Huron Perth Public Health
  ○ Huron Perth Student Transportation Services

● If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact our Help Line at covidpre-registration@ed.amdsb.ca or 519-527-0111 ext 124.