



COVID-19 PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2020



Return to class with health and safety measures

Learning in the new school year

Students will return to school with safety and health measures for everyone to follow, reducing the risk of COVID-19.

We all can play a role learning together, staying safe and keeping apart.

*School specific information will be shared August 25th.

SAFETY & HEALTH MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

Keeping each other safe

Cleaning and Handwashing

- Caretakers will disinfect high touch areas throughout the day
- Classrooms routines will include:

- **Hand washing and/or sanitizing**

before and after:

an activity, entering/exiting school spaces, eating, recess time, using a computer/iPad, any time students and teachers identify the need

- Disinfecting computers/iPad between users
- Disinfecting shared spaces between student groups
- Physical distancing when possible



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*When physical distancing is not possible, extra emphasis will be on hand hygiene,

respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting and wearing a mask (see page 4-5)

Safety on the bus

Limiting exposure on the bus

- Students will be assigned consistent seating and will be asked to sit with siblings
- Busses will be sanitized between trips
- Grade 4-12 students are required to wear masks

Safety built into the school schedules

Limiting contact and exposure by staying in a small group, instead of mixing with the whole school

- Students will remain with a consistent cohort (**bubble**)

- Homeroom bubble in elementary
- One to three class bubbles in high school (dependent on the school size/schedule)

Safety within a bubble

Limiting exposure within a cohort

- Staff will support students to use designated and consistent assigned spots in the classroom
- Highschool students will eat lunch with one of their cohorts (bubbles)
- Reduction in the number of staff in close and sustained contact with a cohort

Significant reduction in school visitors

Limiting exposure from visitors and guests

- Parents will be asked to avoid visiting the building or if necessary, schedule visits
- A record (sign-in) of all visitors must be kept
- If invited, a visitor will be asked to use [the self-screening tool](#)
- Presentations/Assemblies will be virtual

Wear a mask in some instances (see page 4-5)

Learn together by staying apart

Allow for physical distancing when possible:

- Staggered transition times between classes to avoid crowded hallways and

PARENTS' ROLE IN KEEPING SCHOOL SAFE

Screen for symptoms every morning

- Use [the assessment tool](#) to check every morning to see if your child has any symptoms.
- If “yes” is answered to any of the questions, your child (and possibly siblings) must stay home and call 811 to be directed. A recommendation or negative test will allow your child(ren) to return to school.
 - Please notify the school as soon as possible of a positive test for COVID-19

*All communications are confidential. If a case is of COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed, the Division will take direction from public health

If a student has symptoms related to a pre-existing condition

The student should be tested at least once before returning. If negative for COVID-19 these symptoms can be considered a baseline and no future testing is necessary unless symptoms change.

- Please talk to your school about the pre-existing condition.

Safety for students with underlying medical conditions or family risk factors

Parents should consult their child's physician to consider the health risks and discuss what will best support the child. Contact your child's school to discuss available options and support.

Stay home when sick or if in contact with someone who is sick

Students, parents or family members must not enter school if they:

- Feel sick or have symptoms of COVID-19
- Had close contact with someone who is ill with a cough and/or fever
- Have anyone in the household who has been in close contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to have COVID-19
- Have traveled outside of Canada in the last 14 days
- Had close contact with someone who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days and who is ill.

Avoid entering the school

To reduce exposure, all parents, guardians and visitors are asked to avoid entering schools. If a visit is necessary, schedule a meeting. Refer to your school's plan to find out how the school and parents can work together. If a visit is required, you will be asked to complete the self-assessment prior to entering and wear a mask.

Pick up students promptly if they show symptoms at school

- You will be asked to pick up your child from school immediately if they show symptoms

and call 811 to be assessed for a test.

- The school must be able to contact you at all times during the school day. Please ensure the school has your most up-to-date contact information, including a back-up contact. The student will be asked to wear a mask (if safe to do so) and will be supervised in an isolated room until you get there.

Taking your child to school

If your child normally takes the bus, consider taking them directly to school if you can. This will help with physical distancing on the bus.

Keep a safe distance

To minimize contact please be mindful of keeping 2 meters from others who may not be in your child's bubble.

When unsure – please contact us

We will navigate these very different times together as things evolve.

School Website and contact information

<https://www.nesd.ca/Schools>

HELPING STUDENTS TO KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

Your child may feel nervous about returning to school. There will be changes we can help prepare students for. Also, it will be important to focus on what will stay the same. Students will learn in class with their teacher and see friends.

Talk to your child about some of the new health measures to help them prepare for the first day of school:

- Before school - review the Daily Screening Questionnaire every morning
- Plan to have 2+ masks to wear during the day - One for on the bus
- Sanitize hands before entering school and classrooms (sanitation stations will be at entrances)
- Keep a distance between others and follow marks in hallways
- Do not share food or personal items
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Tell staff if feeling sick at school
- Some recess/breaks may be at different times to reduce hallway traffic
- Stay in your bubble during class and lunch time to decrease contact with others.
- Students who take the bus will have to sit in the same seat every day

Cohort

A cohort—or bubble—is a group of students and staff who remain together. The size of the cohort will depend on the school size and schedule.

Be kind with each other, as we work together to keep each other safe.

MASKS IN SCHOOLS

The North East School Division in consultation with public health, has decided to begin the school year at level 2 of the Safe Schools Plan which includes the use of masks.

- All grade 4-12 students are required to wear a mask on school buses unless not able to do so safely.
- Students in pre-k to Grade 3 will be encouraged, but not required, to wear masks while in school or on buses.
- It is strongly recommended that students in Grades 4-8 wear a mask in high traffic areas and all other areas where 2-meter distancing is not possible.
- Masks will be required for all students in Grades 9 to 12 in high traffic areas and wherever 2-meter physical distancing is not possible.



How to Wear A Mask
<https://youtu.be/gvLA--hGU70>

HOW TO SAFELY USE A NON-MEDICAL MASK OR FACE COVERING

DO'S



DO wear a non-medical mask or face covering to protect others.



DO ensure the mask is made of at least two layers of tightly woven fabric.



DO inspect the mask for tears or holes.



DO ensure the mask or face covering is clean and dry.



DO wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching the mask or face covering.



DO use the ear loops or ties to put on and remove the mask.



DO ensure your nose and mouth are fully covered.



DO replace and launder your mask whenever it becomes damp or dirty.



DO wash your mask with hot, soapy water and let it dry completely before wearing it again.



DO store reusable masks in a clean paper bag until you wear it again.



DO discard masks that cannot be washed in a plastic-lined garbage bin after use.

DO YOUR PART.

Wear a non-medical mask or face covering to protect others when you can't maintain a 2-metre distance.

NON-MEDICAL MASKS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR:

- People who suffer from an illness or disabilities that make it difficult to put on or take off a mask
- Those who have difficulty breathing
- Children under the age of 2

DON'T JUDGE OTHERS FOR NOT WEARING A MASK.

Kindness is important as some people may not be able to wear a mask or face covering.

- All staff members are also required to wear masks on buses and when working within a school facility when physical distancing of 2-meter cannot be maintained.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to purchase or construct reusable masks for their child(ren), but the school division will supply disposable non-medical masks as needed. [Here are guidelines for constructing a reusable mask.](#)



<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/publications/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering-en.pdf>

- Parents and guardians are asked to wash reusable student masks according to appropriate guidelines. [Here is more information](#) on mask etiquette and maintenance provided by the Government of Canada.
- *What if I do not have a mask for my child?* The schools will have disposable masks available.

- *Are students to wear masks at all times, like during recess and during lunch?* There will be circumstances during the day where students will have to remove masks and physical distancing protocols are to be implemented during these times as much as possible.
- *What if my child cannot or does not want to wear a mask?* These situations will be assessed on individual basis and a medical note may be required. Please work closely with your school-based administrator to determine options for your unique situation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Will students still participate in extra-curricular and field trips?
 - Schools can continue to plan outdoor learning experiences following transportation guidelines.
 - Highschool Athletics have been paused Provincially until September 28th
 - Additional details will follow as schools settle into a routine.
- Additional information regarding [the care of students who present with symptoms at school](#).
- [COVID-19 Resources for Newcomers](#)