

From: Katie Racey <grd@dsbn.org>

Subject: Return to school!

Good day Greyhound families:

This message contains information about the upcoming return to in-person learning as well as report cards, computer returns, and some helpful hints from Public Health regarding proper mask-wearing, and a note about our calendar. Please read on!

Return to in-person learning

We are very excited to welcome your child(ren) back to in-person learning on Monday, February 8. Please review (again) the information below to be prepared for a few new safety practices:

1. Children in Kindergarten are encouraged to wear a mask, but they are not required to based on the Ministry of Education and Niagara Public Health recommendations.
2. Children in Grades 1–3 will now be wearing masks at school and on the bus, just like their peers in Grades 4–8. We have masks for students who don't have one or who have lost or damaged theirs.
3. Students will wear their masks outside but will be permitted to remove them if they are (and remain) a safe distance from their peers.
4. As has been our practice since school started in September, we will not permit non-essential visitors in our school. You can continue to drop off or pick up items for your child in the school entrance. We have bins just inside the front door what are marked according to grade. It is helpful if anything you drop off is labelled with your child's name. Further, we discourage unnecessary visits (frequent dropping-off of lunches, for example) of any kind to the school. We are similarly limiting movement, as much as possible, within the school.

5. You may have heard that schools may be offering COVID-19 testing. This will be implemented by Niagara Public Health and the Ministry of Education and will not be determined by the DSBN or by our school. As we receive information, we will keep you informed.

Something that remains the same is that it is **essential** is that you complete the [Ministry's Covid-19 School Screening](#) every single day prior to sending your child to school. If the tool indicates that your child not go to school, he/she/they must not attend school that day and it is critical that you follow the directions provided by the Ministry within the tool.

Similarly, if your child exhibits symptoms while at school, we will contact you in order for you to arrange to have your child picked up from school and so that you can seek medical advice.

Related to pick-up at dismissal, our process will remain the same. We ask that parents do not enter the school yard but rather wait at the front gate by the sign or in their cars so that a staff member can call for your child (ren).

Although we are ready and excited for your child(ren) to come back, we understand that for a variety of reasons, you may not yet be ready to send your child back to school. As ever, we endeavor to be flexible with you to ensure your child continues to learn in an environment with which you are comfortable. If you are choosing to delay your child's return to in-person learning, please inform the school office as soon as possible by email or leaving a voicemail so that we can connect with you to discuss options.

Computer returns

If you have borrowed a device from us, please either send it back with your child when he/she returns to school or arrange to drop it off on Monday or Tuesday. Because these devices normally support our students with in-class learning, we are seeking to get them back as soon as possible.

Report cards – Two notes

Change of date

Due to the extension of remote learning, *the Elementary Provincial Report Card (Grades 1–8)* and the *Kindergarten: Communication of Learning* will be issued over two days between February 18–19.

Report cards give a summary of student achievement at the end of each term. Teachers use their professional judgement and consider factors such as consistency, recent improvement and amount of evidence order to determine students' grades or marks. Teachers and students work together to gather evidence of their learning over time from observations, conversations and student products.

This year, the Ontario Ministry of Education updated the [math curriculum](#) for Grades 1 to 8 which started in September 2020. The new mathematics curriculum is part of a [four-year math strategy](#) designed to:

- *improve student performance in math
- *help students solve everyday math problems
- *increase students' employability to attain the jobs of the future

Updates to Assessment and Evaluation in Mathematics (Grades 1–8)

To foster a cohesive approach to both instruction and assessment across the elementary mathematics curriculum, achievement in mathematics will be reported in the *Elementary Report Card* as one overall letter grade (Grades 1–6) or percentage mark (Grades 7–8), with supporting comments. Comments will describe significant strengths demonstrated by the student and identify next steps for improvement. Teachers may also describe a student's growth in learning.

The Ministry has provided more information about the new math curriculum for parents on the following website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/new-math-curriculum-grades-1-8>. If you have any questions, please make arrangements to speak with your child's teacher.

Helpful masking information from Public Health

Public Health has shared the following information and hints related to masking.

Suggestions and resources for parents to support mask use for younger grades:

- the parent should wear one to normalize mask-wearing
- show the child how to put a mask on their stuffed animal or doll
- look in the mirror while putting on or wearing the mask
- decorate the mask so it's personalized or fun
- show pictures of other kids wearing masks
- practice wearing it in the house before going out in public with it on

Here is a website with more great tips for

parents: <https://med.umich.edu/mott/thrive/tips-for-helping-kids-wear-masks>

Video for young children that could help normalize the PPE: [Back to School With Elmo:30](#)

PD Day & Family Day reminder

The remainder of our school year calendar remains unchanged and Friday February 12th will be a Professional Development Day where all staff will be engaged in valuable learning opportunities. As well, we wish our school community an enjoyable Family Day Holiday on the following Monday, February 15th!

Stay safe and have a great evening!

K. Racey

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