



September 17, 2021

## **Changes to the Healthy and Safe Schools Guidelines**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Healthy and Safe Schools Guidelines will be modified as of Monday, September 20, 2021.

The number of cases of COVID-19 and the transmission in our communities has had a significant impact on the operation of our schools. We have a duty to ensure the safety of all students, especially our students under the age of 12 who are not yet eligible to receive protection through COVID-19 vaccines. For this reason, we will make the following changes to our plan:

- Kindergarten-Grade 8 classrooms will be returning to class groupings whenever possible; but the number of students in a class will not be reduced. Contact between classes will be restricted to common areas, cafeterias and outdoors.
- Only bubble-friendly field trips that take place outdoors will be permitted.
- Schools are also asked to find ways to keep distance between the class groupings in common areas such as hallways, cafeterias and others as much as possible. For example, changing schedules for lunch to have less people in the cafeteria, at outdoor recess or other recesses between classes for students in Grades 6 to 8 in order to minimize the number of students in the hallways.
- Physical education classes will be taught outdoors if the weather permits. If the physical education class is taught indoors, students must wear masks. Fully vaccinated teachers may remove their mask for instructional purposes but must wear them if engaged in physical activity.
- Assemblies of any size are no longer permitted.
- Community use of schools will continue to be restricted to youth activities. Students 12 years of age or older, unless they have a medical exemption, will need to be vaccinated. All adults accompanying these kids will be vaccinated.

In addition, effective Wednesday, September 22, 2021, students who are eligible to be vaccinated (born in 2009 and earlier, or those with a medical exemption) must be vaccinated to participate in indoor or outdoor extracurricular and intramural activities.

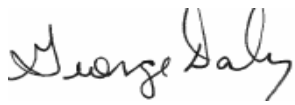
To reduce the risk of transmission on the bus, we are asking parents who are able to do so, to please drive their child to school and help reduce the number of students on the bus to encourage greater physical distancing.

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As always, our plans are living documents that are constantly re-evaluated. These changes to the plan will be reviewed regularly through the coming weeks and we remain committed to continue keeping you informed through the coming year.

Everyone has a role to play in keeping our schools healthy, safe and open. We urge you, as a parent, to wear a mask and reduce your contacts as much as possible to protect the students and allow them to continue to have access to quality education and enjoy their childhood.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to learn from best practices and adapt to evolving situations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Daley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'G' and 'D'.

George Daley  
Deputy Minister