



Small Schools Make a Difference

2022 03 11

Dear Superior-Greenstone DSB Families,

On the eve of the March Break, we are reaching out to you to provide you with an overview of the new requirements that were communicated to school boards across Ontario on March 9, by the Ministry of Education and the Chief Medical Officer of Health. These requirements include the lifting of most of the health and safety measures that have been in place in schools for the past two years. At this time, note the following changes:

1. Although **masks** are no longer required to be worn, we continue to **strongly encourage all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask when in our schools and offices**. This is a simple safety measure that provides additional protection to everyone, which will reduce the spread of the virus, and assist in keeping our schools open.
2. The **vaccination requirement** for student athletes to participate in “away” games will be lifted.
3. **Rapid antigen test kits** will continue to be provided to all students and staff.
4. **Daily screening confirmation** will no longer be required; however, all staff and students must continue to screen daily before coming to work. The screening tool has once again been updated and can be found at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>. All school visitors, including parent/caregivers, are strongly encouraged to screen prior to entering the building, and to stay home if you have symptoms.
5. If students or staff are engaging in **international travel** (including to the United States), they must wear a mask to school, self-monitor and keep a list of close contacts for **14 days** upon their return to Canada. For more information, visit <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/exemptions>.

While SGDSB is required to adhere to these changes, we are committed to a careful and cautious approach to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. We are aware of the number of positive COVID-19 cases in our communities, the lower vaccination rates in the district, and the impact that staff shortages is having on the school’s ability to function. We will continue to make masks available to students and staff upon request and will reinforce hand washing/use of hand sanitizers, respiratory etiquette (e.g. disposal of used tissues). The enhanced cleaning measures will remain in place, as will the focus on effective ventilation in all learning spaces. Student and staff attendance is important, and school

principals will be engaging in a staged approach to reintroducing gatherings (e.g. assemblies).

Moving forward, we acknowledge that there will be many perspectives regarding these changes, and perhaps some additional worry and fear. We will maintain the focus on the health and safety of all students and reinforce that our staff will support the decisions of every family regarding the wearing of masks. This decision is one that can only be made by the family, in consideration of their own unique circumstances. Our staff is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, inclusive, accessible, harassment and discrimination-free environment for all.

Schools will be providing specific information regarding what families can expect upon the return from the March Break.

In the meantime, I wish each of you a very enjoyable and safe March Break. It has been two years of challenge due to the virus, however; families have continued to provide significant support to schools, to staff, and most importantly, to your children. We appreciate your partnership in education as we continue to return schools to pre-pandemic conditions, including sports, community use, and parent engagement.

Yours in education,



Nicole Morden Cormier
Director of Education