



## Small Schools Make a Difference

2021/02/19

Dear Families,

Thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and perseverance during what has been a very different school year for everyone. We are proud of the students and staff for their continued focus on safety, well-being and health.

I am writing to you today with several important updates.

1. **March Break** – The March Break will be postponed this year due to factors relating to COVID-19. Consequently, we will now have a Spring Break, which will take place from Monday, April 12, 2021 to Friday, April 16, 2021.
2. **Provincial School and Child Care Screener** – Daily screening for students and staff remains a key safety protocol for schools. Please note that the Ministry of Education’s COVID-19 screening tool has been updated once again to reflect the new Provincial direction on when to keep students home and when they can return to school. Please ensure that you are visiting this site regularly to verify any changes to the screening tool that may be the result of the new COVID-19 variants that have surfaced in Ontario. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>
3. **Isolation Requirements** – The Ministry of Health has issued new requirements for those living in the same household as an individual who has symptoms of COVID-19. All staff and students must now stay home from school or childcare if anyone in their household has new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 **AND** has been recommended for isolation and testing by a medical practitioner. These individuals will be required to follow the advice of their medical practitioner before they can return to a school. This new requirement may result in increased staff shortages and thus, there may be classroom or school closures. Please ensure that your up-to-date contact information has been shared with your child(ren)’s school.
4. **Use of Gyms** – We have also been given notice of enhanced restrictions for the use of school gymnasiums. You may see adjustments to your child(ren)’s Physical Education class, as students can only be engaged in moderate physical activity indoors where they can be physically distanced (2 meters) while wearing their mask. If gym class can be held outdoors, students and staff must remain physically

distant but may remove their masks. **This allowance is unlike recess, where students must wear their masks at all times.**

5. **Asymptomatic Targeted Testing** – School boards will now be required to ensure that students and staff are able to have a COVID-19 test, **if they are symptom-free.** In conjunction with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, each week a different school from Superior-Greenstone District School Board will be offering COVID-19 testing. A schedule will be released to families soon. Childcares are also eligible for this voluntary testing. Permission notes will be sent to families. If a test result is positive, the family will be notified first, and then the school principal. Confidentiality will be maintained through this process.

If you have any questions about the information provided in this letter, please do reach out to your school. We want to reassure you that we are here to provide support. Thank you, once again, for your continued patience. Please be safe and healthy.

Yours in education,



Nicole Morden Cormier  
Director of Education