



# Fact Sheet

## Special Education

Updated August 4, 2020

### **The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is a top priority as schools are reopened**

#### Return to School Model

The return to school in the fall of 2020-21 will be voluntary and based on parent choice. For parents who choose not to send their child back to school, SGDSB is prepared to offer remote learning. As some of our students with special needs have underlying health concerns we know that parents/guardians will be making challenging decisions for the health and safety of their children.

#### **All students have the opportunity to attend school 5 days per week.**

#### **DELIVERY MODEL (CONVENTIONAL)**

The Ministry of Education has announced that using specific safety measures as well as limiting the amount of student contacts will allow all students to return to school in September. The following precautions will be mandatory:

- ✓ Normal school day routine with enhanced public health protocols (see PPE, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette fact sheets)
- ✓ All grade 4 to 12 students and staff will be required to wear masks indoors on school property.
- ✓ Timetables will limit the number of direct and indirect student contacts to approximately 100 students in the school.

August 18 attendance confirmation deadline – families have until August 18<sup>th</sup> to confirm their child's attendance (spot in the classroom). After this date, students may be placed on a waitlist. Students on the waitlist will be provided remote learning.

#### **VIRTUAL PLATFORMS**

For families who are choosing to keep their child(ren) at home, remote learning will be made available. Schools will ensure that students needing technology and/or WIFI have those tools ready for start-up. All SGDSB approved platforms and software are accessible to all students and school teams will ensure that families will be involved in this selection. School teams will continue to contact families on a regular basis.

- ✓ Students participating in remote learning will be timetabled and provided with a schedule of classes that are teacher-facilitated and support all areas of curriculum, as they normally would in school instruction.



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- ✓ Teachers will provide students with planned curriculum related tasks and shared via online platforms (Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom). Students will be participating in synchronous learning for part of their day. As mentioned, schedules will be planned and shared with students.
- ✓ Students will be able to attend class 'virtually' at designated periods throughout the day.
- ✓ The Ministry recommends that, to the greatest extent possible, assessment, evaluation and reporting activities would proceed as usual, with a focus on the achievement of overall expectations and the primary purpose of assessment and evaluation being to improve student learning.

## MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS

Individual Education Plans will be carried out as per regular expectations and goals with considerations made regarding changes in the school environment and/or remote learning needs.

- ✓ These will continue to be reviewed and updated as student needs change depending on their learning environment.
- ✓ Additional plans and transition time will be made to support a smoother transition to school.
- ✓ Staff will be supporting students in using assistive technology.
- ✓ We will be working with our service providers (George Geoffrey's, NOSP, DILICO, etc.) to develop local protocols for the access of non-school based providers, such as rehabilitation therapists and nursing staff, and supporting remote delivery of these services where in-school delivery is not possible (TinyEye in some locations).
- ✓ Parent Meetings, case conferences, IPRC meetings will occur virtually by computer or telephone depending on the comfort of each family.
- ✓ Service providers such as Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy etc., will continue to provide services in school while following safety protocols and personal protective equipment.

## HOW WILL STAFF ENSURE THE SAFETY OF MY CHILD AND THEIRS?

SGDSB will be continuously consulting with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) on options for personal protective equipment (PPE), staff training, and potential continued remote learning where return is not possible. The safety of all staff and students is our priority and individual plans will be created to ensure student needs and dignity are met.



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## Personal Protective Equipment

- ✓ In situations where, for example direct contact is required with a student for positioning and assistance with eating or toileting, the following PPE will be provided: a medical/surgical grade mask and eye protection in the form of goggles or a face shield, and gloves as appropriate.
- ✓ When staff are required to wear masks or other PPE, they will be explaining why they are to students so that they have the knowledge. Staff will ensure that the PPE is worn in a way that is supportive to student's well-being and ensures their feeling of safety and security.
- ✓ Our staff will be trained in the use of the equipment as well as disposal as required.
- ✓ Every effort will be made to ensure that student and staff safety are a priority.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION ROOMS AND SPACES

- ✓ At times students are withdrawn to provide specialized supports and or sensory opportunities. Attempts will be made to limit withdrawals and if/when they do happen sanitization will occur in between student usages.
- ✓ We will be restricting the number of different adult contacts with students to maintain less exposure to others.
- ✓ Accessible washrooms will be maintained and sanitized regularly.
- ✓ Safety screens are accessible in every school to support face to face contact where masks may not be worn.

***This Fact Sheet has been designed to provide information for school communities considering the changes required by COVID-19. For any questions, concerns, or accommodations, please contact your child's school principal.***