

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Earlier today, the Minister of Education confirmed that Ontario schools will re-open for in-person learning for all students on Monday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.

While we are still awaiting additional information and direction from the Ministry, here are some of the details that have been shared so far:

### **Masks**

- All Ontario school boards will be receiving three-ply cloth masks for students. We have not yet received these masks, but once we do, they will be distributed to schools. Students may choose to wear the three-ply cloth masks, or their own masks.
- Our school board has already received and distributed non-fit tested N95 masks for use by school staff.

### **Screening**

- The Ontario government has updated screening requirements through their [School Screening Tool](#) for students and staff.
- There are significant changes to the new school screening tool that apply to symptomatic individuals and their household members. Please continue to be vigilant in monitoring for symptoms and completing the [COVID-19 School Screening Tool](#) each day.
- As was done at the start of this school year, students attending in-person instruction will be required to show daily proof of confirmation of screening. This measure will be in place until further notice.

### **Rapid Antigen Test Kits**

- The Ontario government will be providing rapid antigen test kits for students and staff.
  - We have not yet received these test kits, but once we do, they will be distributed to schools with additional instructions.

### **Measures to Avoid Further School Closures**

School boards have also been directed to consider a number of steps to avoid and minimize school closures, in recognition of anticipated increases in absences.

This may include:

- combining classes and assigning students to different classes to ensure adequate supervision;
- introducing rotating, planned remote learning days, if needed.

We will make every effort to keep schools open for in-person learning, but we recognize there may be occasions when individual classes or schools may need to

move to remote learning for a period of time. Schools will notify parents and guardians as soon as possible if and when a class or school needs to close.

## Change to Learning Environment

### Elementary Students

- A reminder that parents and guardians with children in elementary school may request a change in learning environment (in-person to virtual or vice versa).
- The online request form will remain open until Friday, January 14, 2022.
- Any requested changes will take effect on Monday, January 24, 2022.
- Visit the HCDSB website for more information:  
<https://www.hcdsb.org/2022/01/change-to-learning-environment-for-elementary-students-request-form-now-open/>

### Secondary Students

- At the secondary school level, students may move to remote learning at any point throughout the school year.
- Requests to return to in-class instruction may be made through the School Principal at the start of a new quadmester.

## Updates and Additional Information

We are expecting a letter to all parents and guardians from Dr. Meghani, the Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region later this week, and will share it with you, along with any additional details we receive from the Ministry as they become available.

We will also as share this information on our [HCDSB website](#) and through our social media channels:

- Twitter: [@HCDSB](#)
- Instagram: [@HaltonCatholicDSB](#)
- Facebook: [Halton Catholic District School Board](#)

Thank you once again for your ongoing support and understanding as we work with the Ministry of Education and our Public Health officials to keep our community healthy and safe for all.

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