



What to Expect as Elementary Schools Reopen in September 2020

Kindergarten to Grade 8

We are looking forward to welcoming your child back for another school year of learning together, despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. To help you prepare for a safe return to school, here is an overview of our Reopening Plans for the 2020-21 school year.

More information is available at www.peelschools.org/reopening

Return to school full time, Monday to Friday

Elementary students have the option to return to school full time and attend school in-person, five days per week. Students will remain in one assigned group (known as a cohort) to limit interactions with other students, including during lunch and recess.

Another option: Learn at home through the *PDSB Online School*

Attending school in person is voluntary for the 2020-21 school year. If families choose not to send their children to school for in-person learning, they can instead learn from home through *distance learning only*. These students will be enrolled in our new *PDSB Online School*. The *PDSB Online School* will offer the full Ontario curriculum through live, online experiences and follow-up activities that students work on from home. This instruction will be delivered by Peel board educators, but not necessarily by an educator at your child's school.

If you enrol in this learning model and need support with access to technology, please [contact](#) your school directly.

Switching between learning models (UPDATED)

Elementary students may switch from **distance learning to in-person learning** at key dates throughout the school year. Families will have until Sept. 10, 2020 at 3 p.m. to inform their Principal. We anticipate another opportunity to change learning models mid-November.

Elementary students who opt for distance learning will be enrolled in our *PDSB Online School*, where they will be taught remotely by a Peel board educator. This educator may not be a teacher at your child's physical school.

After the key entry deadline passes, students will remain in the *PDSB Online School* until the next key entry time. A process will be developed to facilitate this transition.

Families will have the option to transition their child(ren) from **in-person learning to distance learning** throughout the school year. Schools will work with families to determine the least disruptive timing for a transition to distance learning. Since this transition will result in a move to a different teacher, every effort will be made to provide students with a continuous learning experience.

Enhanced health and safety measures

Screening and when to stay at home

A safe school is always more important than a perfect attendance record.

Families must use this [checklist](#) to perform a daily screening of their children before arriving at the bus stop and school. If your child is experiencing any symptoms, please keep them home and seek medical attention as required. If students show COVID-19 symptoms while at school, they will move to a designated isolation room to wait to be picked up to go home.

Wear a mask and/or face covering

As mandated by the [Ministry of Education](#), students in grades 1 through 12 are required to use masks and/or face coverings while on board-provided transportation (e.g., buses) and inside the school (e.g., during class and in the hallways). Kindergarten students are strongly encouraged to wear masks, but not required. Reasonable exceptions will apply. If you have concerns, please speak with your school principal.

Help your child get used to wearing a mask by reviewing these [Government of Ontario's guidelines](#) together.

Practice hand hygiene

Hand sanitizer will be available at school entry and in every classroom. Students and staff will be directed to sanitize hands when they enter the school building and classroom, before and after eating, after using the washroom, and at other times throughout the day. All classes will have scheduled washroom and hand-washing breaks.

Keep a safe distance from others

New school routines will be in place to encourage as much distance between students and other classes as possible. This includes one-direction hallways, cohorting, revised drop-off/pick-up routines, closed shared spaces (such as libraries, auditoriums, cafeterias, and changerooms), seating assignments, coordination of class movement throughout the school and more. To limit contact with others, students will remain in their classroom for all subjects, with the exception of Health and Physical Education.

Enhanced cleaning and disinfection routines

New enhanced health and safety measures have been added to all aspects of school routines, based on guidance from public health agencies and the Ministry of Education. Custodial staff will be using hospital-grade disinfectants for daily cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school, including high-touch surfaces. Spaces shared by different cohorts will be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.

New bus routines

On the school bus, students will be assigned seats by classroom cohorts and siblings from the same household. Surface areas that are frequently touched will be cleaned by the driver between runs. Masks and/or face coverings are required for students in grades 1 to 12 and encouraged for students in Kindergarten, with medical exceptions. If your child will not be using board-provided transportation, please complete this [Student Transportation of Peel Region Opt-out Form](#).

Special Education

Elementary students in Special Education classes will attend school every day. Individual Education Plans will continue to be supported for students who are learning in-person and at home. See our [plans related to students in Special Education classes](#).

Child care routines

Before- and after-school programs will continue to operate with new health and safety protocols. Contact your providers for more information.

Mental Health and community supports

During these challenging times, the Peel board has mental health and well-being [supports and resources](#) available for students and families, as well as a comprehensive list of community supports available for mental health, food, financial and shelter needs.

Stay up-to-date

To learn more about the board's Reopening Plans for 2020-21, visit www.peelschools.org/reopening. This webpage will be updated as new information becomes available.

Definitions:

Cohorts: Cohorting is the practice of keeping students together in a small group throughout their school day, with limited exposure to multiple Teachers or a wide variety of classmates. This practice limits the number of other students that a single student is in contact with.

Distance learning: Students enrolled in distance learning will learn at home through online instruction provided by a Peel board educator. THIS will include a blend of live, real-time learning as well as follow-up activities that they will work on at home.