



York Catholic District School Board

Catholic Education Centre, 320 Bloomington Road West, Aurora, Ontario L4G 0M1

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August 28, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we at the York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) continue to prepare for September, we are looking forward to welcoming students back to school after many months of separation. Whether they are attending in person or participating in remote learning we are eagerly awaiting their arrival. Staff has been working endless hours to prepare for their return.

Following recent updates from the Ministry of Education and York Region Public Health, we have had to update our re-entry plans for our secondary schools. Here to help you are some additional updates about the start of the secondary school year.

Daily self-assessment

On a daily basis before leaving home, parents/guardians are responsible to conduct a COVID-19 self-assessment with their child. Please review and adhere to the [Checklist from York Region Public Health](#). If you are experiencing any symptoms on this checklist, please complete Ontario's [COVID-19 self-assessment](#) for next steps.

Staggered re-entry dates

As stated in the [parent letter](#) from yesterday, the staggered re-entry schedule has changed to allow more time for staff to review all of the health and safety protocols and new school routines established through directives from York Region Public Health and the Ministry of Education.

All Elementary and Secondary Schools: September 8 and 9: no students will attend school. During this period, staff will be preparing for learning during COVID-19.

Secondary Start Dates (including remote learning):

September 10: Grade 9 orientation Cohort A face to face (Cohort B + C virtual)

September 11: Grade 9 orientation Cohort B face to face (Cohort A + C virtual)

September 14: Grades 9-12 Cohort A face to face (Cohort B + C virtual)

September 15: Grades 9-12 Cohort B face to face (Cohort A + C virtual)

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Academy

Grades 9 to 12 will follow the above listed schedule.

Grades 7 and 8 will use the following staggered entry schedule:

- September 11: Grade 7 (Orientation)
- September 14: Grade 7 and 8

Please note that Grade 9 students at Our Lady of the Lake will receive on their first day of school an orientation that consists of an introduction to secondary curriculum pathways and graduation requirements.

St. Luke Catholic Learning Centre

All students will begin school on Thursday, September 10.

NOTE: Once students return to school on their designated start date, they will continue to attend school following their regular schedule.



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Scheduled entry and exit times for secondary students

In an effort to reduce congestion and allow for physical distancing, some secondary schools will implement staggered entry and exit times depending on the school enrollment numbers. Information regarding staggered entry and exit times will be shared by your school principal through School Messenger emails and/or school newsletters next week.

What happens when a case of COVID-19 is detected at school?

On August 26, 2020, the Ministry of Education released its [Operational Guidance: COVID-19 Management in Schools](#) document. The document guides and directs school boards on the steps that will be taken if a case of COVID-19 occurs in schools. If a case of COVID-19 is detected in a school, we will work with York Region Public Health to notify families immediately, provide updates and take the appropriate next steps.

For more information, please read the Province of Ontario's [COVID-19 Guidance: School Outbreak Management](#) document.

Rules of mask wearing

As per the Ministry of Education's direction, **students in Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks while in school**, with accommodations available for those with a medical condition. Correct mask wearing procedures will be taught, and reinforced through signage and verbal reminders. Staff will also be required to wear masks.

For more information on our process for requesting a student mask-wearing accommodation, please [click here](#).

Parents are invited to view this [back to school resource video](#) for more information. For instructions on proper mask wearing procedures, please go to the 11-minute mark of the video.

Below is the procedure that should be followed for the donning (putting on) and doffing (taking off) of masks/face coverings along with potential options that can be considered in order to minimize the risk of cross contamination when donning and doffing masks/face coverings.

Students are asked to bring an extra mask with them to school. Students must bring a **paper bag or breathable cloth bag in which to store their masks, if necessary**. Plastic bags are not preferred and only recommended for short periods of time (i.e. up to 15 minutes).

Improper donning, doffing and storage of masks/face coverings can increase the user's risk of contaminating themselves. Therefore, schools will develop protocols for the safe handling and storage of masks/face coverings. This activity will be supervised and teachers will remind students of the proper techniques as follows:

Removing/Doffing of a mask

- Clean hands
- Remove from ear loops being careful not to touch the front of the mask
- Fold it inwards and place in a clean individually labeled paper or cloth bag
- Clean hands again



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Putting on/Donning mask

- Clean hands
- Open mask/face covering storage bag, be careful not to touch anyone else's mask/face covering
- Pick up the mask/face covering by the ear loops and put on the face being careful not to touch the outside of the mask/face covering

The supply of student masks provided by the Ministry is intended to be a "back-up" supply rather than the primary supply for students. **This means parents are still expected to supply masks for their children. Please ensure your child brings an extra mask to school.**

Students without a mask will be provided with one upon entry to the school. Students choosing not to wear their masks, without a valid accommodation, will be immediately sent home. Parents will be contacted and students are welcomed to return to school when their mask is in place.

For more information, please visit our [2020-2021 School Re-entry Plan](#).

What to bring on your first day of school

Individual schools will be sending out their own list of requirements for families on what to send to school with students through School Messenger and/or school newsletters.

Below is a brief overview of things to keep in mind before sending your child(ren) to school:

- Students should bring their own **refillable drinking bottles**. Please label the water bottle with your child's name. Please note cafeteria food service and vending machines will not be available
- Personal school supplies. All students should label their school supplies (e.g. pencil case) with their name
- Students should bring a **paper bag or breathable cloth bag** in which to store their masks if necessary. Plastic bags are not preferred and only recommended for short periods of time (i.e. up to 15 minutes). Please also bring an **extra face mask** as a backup just in case

When will families learn about school-specific plans?

Parents/guardians will receive a letter from their school for school-specific plans during the week of August 31. We encourage parents/guardians to continue checking their emails for updates. Please ensure you check the email that is registered at the school. Parents/guardians are reminded to check both their inbox and spam/junk folder.

On behalf of everyone at YCDSB, I would like to thank our families for your continued support, patience and understanding as we plan for a safe restart in September.

Yours in Catholic education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Battista".

Mary Battista
Director Designate