

January 13, 2022

Hello everyone,

I hope you are all well. I hope I don't sound like a broken record, but I always want to start with gratitude of how amazingly supportive our school community is! Thank you. Please know that we are all doing our very best in quite challenging and unprecedented circumstances. Compassion, understanding, patience and respect go such a long way to help us all get through this. As things are changing so rapidly, it is very important to keep checking both the board and the school websites for updated information. Please also check your email frequently, as I will be sending emails with any updates I receive. Anything that is emailed to all parents is also posted on our school website. If you have not done so already, please be sure that the school has your latest contact information. It is more vital than ever, for schools to have current parent contact details.

Friday January 14th - Asynchronous Learning and Time to Transition to In-Person Learning

- ***As staff work to prepare their classrooms for in-person learning on Monday we want to inform families/caregivers that regular synchronous instruction may be interrupted on Friday to allow staff time in our schools to be ready to go for Monday. Asynchronous materials will be available for students on their Google Classroom to work through on Friday and classroom teachers will communicate with students about any scheduled synchronous/live instruction time that may be scheduled for Friday as well so they do not miss those opportunities.***
- ***If your child has borrowed a chromebook from school, please be sure to return it on Monday with the charging cord. Many thanks. We will need as many chromebooks back on Monday as possible.***
- The provincial government has announced that Ontario schools will reopen to in-person learning starting on Monday January 17, 2022. We know that parents have many questions while determining whether or not to send their children to school. As teachers, we believe it is of utmost importance to keep students connected to their school, their teachers and their classmates. The Upper Grand District School Board has many protective health and safety measures in place at our schools. Please read below for reminders and updates regarding these protective measures.

- In addition to distancing, masking, and hand hygiene protocols, the UGDSB will continue to follow the recommendations and guidance of public health officials regarding COVID-19 safety and prevention.
- All families will be reminded to [screen students for symptoms daily](#) before leaving for school. When in-person learning resumes, schools will verify that student screening has taken place each day.
- All students (JK-Grade 12+) are required to wear a mask or face covering when in school or on a school transportation vehicle, unless a valid medical mask exemption is approved. [The UGDSB recently updated its mask exemption criteria and process.](#)
- Students will be provided with three-layer cloth masks to add to their current supply of reusable masks.
- Staff have been provided with additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), e.g. non-fit tested N95 masks.
- Mandatory COVID-19 Refresher Training for all staff prior to the resumption of in-person learning.
- Further to our commitment to improve ventilation and air flow, the UGDSB has procured additional stand-alone High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter units for all secondary school learning spaces, including Continuing Education sites. This is in addition to the UGDSB providing all elementary school classrooms and portables with a HEPA unit at the start of the school year. To date, the UGDSB has purchased 2,200 HEPA filter units, in addition to the units provided by the province.
- As an additional measure beyond the provincial requirements for ventilation, the UGDSB will continue to conduct [air flow monitoring in schools.](#)
- Because the Ministry has suspended the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases and schools/boards will no longer be informed of all positive cases, the UGDSB will launch a COVID case proxy pilot program, and will publicly display school absences on a daily basis on the UGDSB website.
- The UGDSB expects to receive rapid antigen tests from the province and details on this will be shared widely once information is received.
- The UGDSB will continue to pause all extracurricular activities and Community Use of Schools.
- The UGDSB is reviewing the lunchtime guidelines for elementary and secondary students eating in class/school.
- The UGDSB will continue to consult and collaborate with its partners at Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and other health agencies to make the public aware of opportunities to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and to facilitate Public Health vaccination clinics.