

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our new and returning students back to Elora Public School this September!

As you are aware, the Upper Grand District School Board has continued to put extensive plans in place for the school year. Our school has maintained plans that include both operational changes (how we manage the people and resources within the school) and health and safety changes (our ongoing response to the COVID pandemic). We hope this document will help answer your questions about the specifics about the opening day and first week of school.

Please also look through our board Student and Family Guide, for more detailed information about the changes for this school year.

2021-22 School Operations: Student and Family Guide

Before Coming to School

COVID-19 Screening:

- All parents must screen their children every day before leaving home for symptoms of COVID-19. If there are symptoms, children need to stay home from school. If COVID-19 is suspected, testing is recommended.

- Link to [self-screening tool](#)

What to Bring to School

Please keep your child's personal items to a minimum! To support a safe and comfortable environment, students are asked to bring the following items clearly labelled with the student's name:

- Knapsack or tote bag for personal belongings
- food for two nutrition breaks
- Face masks - two or three would be great!
- Personal labelled water bottle
- outdoor shoes and indoor shoes (to remain at school)
- Only those items that are necessary for the day (e.g., pencil case, calculator for grade 7 & 8, pens, pencils)

Teachers will communicate any other individual class needs during the first week of school.

We will not be using change rooms for physical education class initially. We hope to be able to eventually use them.

LOCKERS FOR GRADE 7 AND 8 STUDENTS

We are able to use lockers this year for grade 7 and 8 students. Students should bring a combination lock on the first day so they can have a locker assigned to them.

How will I know what class my child is in?

Our plan is to create pre-recorded messages for each class and send them to families. Over this weekend, you will receive a phone call and an email indicating the class, the homeroom teacher's name and instructions on where to meet the class on the first day. We are still working through some of the technical challenges this may present, but know that families are wondering

about how this information will be passed along so the first day goes smoothly. If this plan changes, we will put an update on our website.

First Day Procedures

Morning Drop Off:

Students should arrive no earlier than 8:45 am if possible. Upon arrival, students will look for their classroom sign. Each class will have a large pylon with a teacher sign on it. The general areas for meeting are:

Kindergarten - by the centre doors and “the rocks” behind the school

Grades 1-3 - by the centre doors and toward the portable

Grades 4-6 - near the portable (east side of school)

Grades 7 and 8 - on the hard top near the parking lot

Bus students will be dropped off at the front of the school in the bus loop and be directed by staff members around to the back of the school.

All staff will be outdoors to help with questions and help students find their locations.

Parents of younger students are more than welcome to take their child to their designated area, however, we do still want to limit the number of additional adults in the yard.

Currently, masks are not mandatory for students outside. As well, students do not have designated recess areas by class. There will be more flexibility in terms of recess and playing with peers in other classes. While there may be some mingling prior to joining the class line, we ask that students put their masks on when lining up so they are ready for entry into the school. Masks must be worn inside for all students in kindergarten to grade 8.

****For the first day of school, we ask that students have their masks on when they arrive at school. The yard will be busy and we want to set good routines regarding playing outside. While masks aren't mandatory, distancing among students is still encouraged.**

At this time, parents are not allowed to enter the building. Communication with the office and classroom teachers is strongly encouraged using telephone

519-846-5999, elora.ps@ugdsb.on.ca, and all classroom teacher emails are located on our school website ugdsb.ca/elora

Medication

If you have not yet spoken with the office about your child's medication, please ensure you do. We will have a table set up on the first day to accept medication and have forms ready to be filled out. We would much prefer to have all of this in place before the first day. Please contact the office and we will be happy to meet you and give you the necessary paperwork and accept your child's medication to have ready for the first day. Thank you!

Designated Entry Doors:

To facilitate speedy entry in the morning and to limit unnecessary travel through the building, each grade/class will be assigned an entry/exit door. This will be the only door that students will use for entering the building, for accessing outdoor activities (and recess) and departing at the end of the school day. All teachers and staff will explain the protocol for each class on the first day. For the start of the school year, where possible, teachers will use doors that enter directly into their classroom.

School Greeters:

We are fortunate enough to again have school greeters in the morning. They will be able to assist with student arrival and remind students to put on their masks and remain distanced as they prepare to enter the school.

Late Arrival/Returning from Appointments:

Students who arrive late to school will need to enter through the front door of the school, sanitize hands, put on their mask and check in at the office. Parents need to remain outside. Parents and caregivers, please call the school when you arrive and we can come to meet your child at the door.

Hand washing and sanitizing

We will continue to have a strong focus on proper hand washing and sanitizing. This will occur when entering and exiting the building as well as during eating time and other transitions.

Lunch Procedures:

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Staff will continue to supervise in these spaces as per usual. Masks will come off during eating time and will need to go back on once kids are done eating. They will be given a lanyard to hold their mask once they get outside.

Please also make sure that your child has a labelled water bottle. Students will only be allowed to fill water bottles at the fountain. Students may not drink directly from the fountain.

We know that this is a lot of information, however, in general, the start of this school year is very similar to last year. We are all hoping that some of the safety protocols in place ease up and we can get back to all of our regular school activities.

There is always anxiety associated with the start of any school year. Please trust that all staff here at Elora Public School are working hard so we can have a smooth and successful transition back to in-school learning.

Don't hesitate to send a message or give us a call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Curt McQueen (Principal) and Dawn Airdrie (Vice Principal)