**Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year!**

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our new and returning students back to James McQueen PS this September. As you are aware, the Upper Grand District School Board has put extensive plans in place for the school year. Our school has now created plans that include both operational changes (how we manage the people and resources within the school) and health and safety changes (our response to the COVID pandemic). We hope this document will help answer your questions about the specifics of opening day and the first week of school.

Please also look through our board Parent Handbook, for more detailed information about the changes for this school year. There is also a link to the Board Website and the Parent Question and Answer (Q&A) page.

[Link to Parent Handbook](https://www.ugdsb.ca/community/coronavirus/reopening-schools-plan/reopening-schools-parent-guide/)

[Link to Board Website and Parent Q & A](https://www.ugdsb.ca/community/coronavirus/reopening-schools-plan/reopening-schools-faq/)

**Staggered Entry**

We will be having a “staggered entry” for all students this year. This means that all students will come to school with approximately half of their classmates on alternating days for the first two weeks of school. This will allow us to carefully review and establish safety routines with fewer students in the building. They are organized alphabetically by last name, from A-L and M-Z. Groups will attend school as per the chart below:

|  |
| --- |
| **JK to Grade 3 Schedule of staggered entry to the school year**  |
|  | **Monday****Sept. 7th** | **Tuesday****Sept. 8th** | **Wednesday Sept. 9th** | **Thursday****Sept. 10th** | **Friday****Sept. 11th** |
| **All Students** | Labour Day HolidaySchool Closed | School closed to students | School closed to students | Last Name A – L onlyFull Day | Last Name M – Z onlyFull Day |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Monday****Sept. 14th** | **Tuesday Sept. 15th** | **Wednesday****Sept. 16th** | **Thursday****Sept. 17th** | **Friday****Sept. 18th** |
| **All Students** | Last Name A – L onlyFull Day | Last Name A – L onlyFull Day | Last Name M – Z onlyFull Day | Last Name M – Z onlyFull Day | All Students Attend |

**Parents/Guardians will receive a phone call on September 8th from their child’s teacher. The teacher will let you know who they are and where your child should join the class on the first day of school (and each day after that). We are excited to talk to you!**

**Start of the day**

Parents/guardians will be asked to perform a daily screening of their child(ren) for COVID-19 symptoms before leaving for school. For more information regarding self-screening, please refer to the parent guide (link above). Students cannot attend school with COVID symptoms.

**Bus**

Students will wear masks while on the bus. Special circumstances may dictate that a student cannot wear a mask - please contact the school if needing to discuss this matter. There will be a seating plan for students riding the bus. The operator of the bus will be wearing PPE.

The school board does not decide the COVID-19 safety protocols for student transportation. For more information, visit the STWDSTS website at[https://stwdsts.ca](https://stwdsts.ca/).

**Arrival**

Students that walk to school are encouraged to arrive no more than ten minutes before the start of the school day.

Students that arrive by bus will exit one bus at a time. All of our kindergarten students will go to their classroom when the bus arrives in the morning. All other students will go to their designated class area on the yard. Teachers will share this information with students on the first day of school.

Classes will have clearly identified areas they are to be in prior to entering the school. This will also include our field area this year to space students out. Students are encouraged to wear waterproof footwear to school in the morning. On the first day(s), homeroom teachers will be present in the zone assigned to their class. We will not be making any changes to classes unless we have to reorganize in September.

**Entry**

Classes will enter under their teacher’s direction. Classes sharing the same hallway will enter in a sequential and socially distanced manner.

Students will not be using hooks this year and do not need to change their shoes upon entering the building. All student belongings will be kept in their bags. Students may put their supplies into their assigned desks during the school day, but desks must be emptied at the end of each day. Bags will be kept on the back of student chairs. Kindergarten students may still use their cubbies, but they will be spaced out more than in the past.

Students are asked to bring a minimal amount of personal belongings to school. Please refer to the parent guide for a list of possible supplies. We are asking students to not bring in their own recess items this year. We will have equipment bins for each class.

**School Day**

Our school day is structured as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Period 1  | 8:50 – 9:40 |
| Period 2 | 9:40 – 10:30 |
| Snack (1) | 10:30 – 10:50 |
| Recess (2) |
| Snack (2) | 10:50 – 11:15 |
| Recess (1) |
| Period 3 | 11:15 – 12:05 |
| Period 4 | 12:05 – 12:55 |
| Snack (1) | 12:55 – 1:15 |
| Recess (2) |
| Snack (2) | 1:15 – 1:40 |
| Recess (1) |
| Period 5 | 1:40 – 2:30 |
| Period 6 | 2:30 – 3:20 |

Students remain with their class during the day, including during recess and lunch. This class is considered their “cohort.” Students will be encouraged to bring their own labelled water bottle to school each day. All water fountains can be used to refill water bottles. Drinking directly from water fountains during COVID-19 will not be permitted.

There will be signage on walls and floors to help students maintain physical distance from one another, where possible. Staff will attempt to maximize physical distance between chairs and tables/desks in all rooms. Staff will avoid activities involving shared objects/toys and look to move activities outside to allow for more space.

All staff, students and essential visitors will be expected to conduct proper hand hygiene, washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer, at the following times:

* Upon entering the school
* At regular time intervals throughout day
* Before/after eating food
* After using the restroom
* Before/after outdoor play
* After sneezing or coughing
* Before putting on and after removing PPE and/or non-medical masks/face coverings.

**Recess**

Recess will look different for our students this year. We have divided the yard into 4 distinct areas and kindergarten/grade1-3 students will be outside at alternate times to reduce the number of students on the yard.

Students will eat in their classrooms.

Students will be assigned an area to play in at recess and a rotation schedule will be established. Each class will be given their own equipment. Staff will find out what items the students in each class would like in their bins. Each “zone” will contain two classes.

***Group 1:***

Dean/Bennett

Schieck/McKinnon

Saar/Zamora

Wasson/Pearson

***Group 2***

Boys

McGregor

Thompson/Brougham

Walker/Gray

Grades 1-3 will rotate to a new zone each day to give them different playing opportunities. Each day on the announcements, we will remind the students of which zone they are assigned to. Kindergarten students will remain in the same area until teachers have determined it is developmentally appropriate to change areas.

Playground structures and sandboxes will be closed to start the school year, due to physical distancing and cleaning concerns.

**End of the day**

Student belongings should be taken home each day to be cleaned as needed. Walkers will be dismissed first. Parents, please practice social distancing if picking up your children at the end of the day. Try not to arrive more than ten minutes before the end of the day. Students will need to leave the school property promptly when dismissed.

Bus students will line up in a designated area (hallway or classroom – students will be given their location the first day they are at school). When their bus is called, they will exit through the front doors.

**Parent Pick Up/Drop Off/Late Arrival**

Parents are not allowed into the school to pick up or drop off their children. Parents will need to call the school (519-843-1700) upon arrival and a staff member will bring the child into the building or escort them out. Only the front doors are to be used to pick up or drop off students during the school day.

As we cannot supervise children in the office as we have done in the past, please communicate, whenever possible, ahead of time with the classroom teacher the time of pick up or drop off. The teacher will notify the office that the child is coming to sit in the front foyer where they will be supervised. Parents will come to the front door and the child will be dismissed by a staff member. Early pick up should only occur for appointments or critical family reasons. If you do need to pick your child up early, we would ask that you do so before 3:15 to avoid parking conflict with the busses and students waiting to board busses.

**General**

As students and staff return to school, cleaning routines will be based on current advice from WDGPH and directions from the Ministry of Education in consultation with the Medical Officer of Ontario.

The board will continue to use asthma-safe, hospital-grade, green-based cleaning products where available.  Scent-free products continue to be recommended for cleaning. Board caretakers are responsible for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Cleaning involves removing dirt, while sanitizing reduces germs from surfaces up to 99.9%. Disinfectants destroy bacteria and prevent them from spreading. Soap and paper towels will be refilled as needed on a regular basis.

Cleaning will take place in all high contact areas including desks, tables, railings, door handles and other surfaces throughout the school. Where a school is open to the students all day, the cleaning will take place at the end of each day with high touchpoint surfaces cleaned throughout the day.  In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands will be cleaned and disinfected at minimum twice per day and when visibly dirty. Our custodial team will also focus on high touch surfaces, including door handles, railings, water fountains, faucets, and areas such as restrooms.  Special attention will also be focused on classrooms and the isolation room when anyone is sent home for exhibiting any signs of illness. A surgical/procedural mask is worn by the symptomatic person (if tolerated). Caretaking staff will clean and disinfect the designated room/space and any items touched by the symptomatic individual.

Other measures will include, but not be limited to:

* Where possible, windows and doors will be opened to allow fresh outdoor air into the school.
* Classrooms that have a water supply will be provided with hand soap and paper towels. Hand sanitizer placement will be prioritized in portables, school entrances and in classrooms without a water supply. Students will also be provided with opportunities for hand washing in regular student restrooms.
* Classroom garbage will be collected and disposed of daily. All garbage pails/bins will be lined with plastic bags.
* Students will be asked to bring home all containers and recycle in their own home rather than at school. We will continue to recycle items such as paper and cardboard boxes from school-based activities.
* Washrooms will have limits on the number of people (and the toilets available) to ensure social distancing. Changerooms are not available to students until further notice.
* Students requiring ice will come to the office window and an adult will attend to them

**Illness**

***Students:***

Each school will designate an isolation room/area.  This room/area will be used for the temporary placement of any individual who becomes ill during the day.  A kit will be available for use by the ill individual and staff member attending to them. This will include hand sanitizer, gloves, surgical/procedural masks, eye protection, tissues and a gown.

A thermometer will be available if needed to verify the temperature of an ill individual. The thermometer must be covered with single-use protective covers (discarded after each use) or cleaned and disinfected after each use. One thermal thermometer will be ordered for each school. This will only be used with the permission of a parent/guardian when there is concern that a student may be ill and is being sent home.

Parents will be notified immediately if a child becomes unwell during the day. Symptomatic students must be immediately separated from others and supervised in a designated room/space. Parents (or designate) must immediately come to the school to pick up their child. Students from the same family may need to be picked up as well. Soiled personal items will be placed in a securely tied plastic bag and sent home with the student’s parent/guardian. Soiled items will not be rinsed and/or washed at school.

***Staff:***

Staff will complete a daily self-assessment prior to leaving for work, and staff who have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will stay home. Symptomatic staff and essential visitors will go home immediately. If they cannot return home immediately, they will be go to the designated isolation room until their departure.

***Confirmed cases of COVID-19:***

When a student or staff member has been diagnosed as positive for the COVID-19 virus, the school and board will follow the directions of Public Health. This may require one or multiple classes to move to a distance learning model or may require the school to be closed to in-person instruction for a length of time necessary, based on the time recommended by WDGPH.

Students or staff who test positive for COVID-19 must bring medical clearance before being allowed to return to in-person instruction.

A Clorox Total 360 System – Electrostatic Sprayer will be used to disinfect any area accessed by someone reported as testing positive for COVID-19.

**Additional**

* Only essential visitors are allowed into the school at this time.
* Meetings with teachers and principals will take place virtually in the initial stages of reopening.
* Students may wear their own non-medical masks, and families who cannot provide a mask for their child may request support from the school administration, and where available, a mask will be provided.
* Students receiving a mask will be taught the proper use of a mask. Any logo or design on a mask will be subject to normal school dress code policies.
* Fire drills will still happen. Bomb, tornado, and lockdown drills, will not.
* No library access except for those students assigned to these spaces (kdg).
* No trips, no extra-curricular activities (unless virtually).
* No school photos.

**Remote Learning**

At this time, students cannot attend school part-time and also participate in remote learning. If students wish to change from remote to in-person learning (or vice versa), they will be permitted to switch formats at set points during the school year.

If students choose to participate in remote learning from home, rather than attend school in person, they will be assigned to ‘central’ classrooms. Classes may be composed of students from different schools, depending on numbers. Central class sizes will be consistent with regular class sizes. Staff who are assigned to remote classes may not be the staff from your child’s school.

For elementary students, remote learning will be delivered via Google Classroom. All teachers providing lessons for a class will collaborate to create one Monday-Friday timetable for students to follow indicating live whole group and live small group learning sessions.  This timetable will be sent to parents/students in advance of being implemented. This will allow parents time to plan for their children to attend remote learning lessons, with some regularity and will create student routines.

**Closing**-

We are very excited to be back at school! Teachers will be focused on creating a welcoming, supportive learning environment as we return from the extended COVID leave. A big part of this learning will be around the routines necessary for health reasons. Many new protocols have been put in place and staff have been reviewing them ahead of the start of school.

Please remember that our students are all very young and are all learning new protocols, as we all are. You can help support our efforts by talking to your child about why and how we socially distance when we are with others.

We look forward to a healthy, productive year☺!