

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year!

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our new and returning students back to Palmerston 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](#)

[Link to Board Website and Parent Q & A](#)

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. We are referring to these two groups as Cohort A and Cohort B. Parents will soon receive a phone message identifying which cohort their child will be in. Cohorts will attend school as per the chart below:

JK to Grade 8 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 Holiday School Closed	School closed to students	School closed to students	Last Name A – L only Full Day	Last Name M – Z only Full Day
	Monday Sept. 14th	Tuesday Sept. 15th	Wednesday Sept. 16th	Thursday Sept. 17th	Friday Sept. 18th
All Students	Last Name A – L only Full Day	Last Name A – L only Full Day	Last Name M – Z only Full Day	Last Name M – Z only Full Day	All Students Attend

Parents/Guardians will receive a phone call prior to the start of school 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).

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>.

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.

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. Our plan is to have teachers informing families of their child's teacher for the year, along with where they will line up in the morning, the week of September 1st so that students have this information for the first day of school. 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 one at a time (4/5 class is part of the foyer group).

****Order of Entry Into School****

Intermediate Hallway

Paquette, Pilbeam, Evans, Reinhart, Sinclair

Junior Hallway

Zavitz, Wells, Stroeder, Pratt, Doig, Raben

Primary Hallway

Pipe/Girard, Hassen, Gellatly, Black, Fairbrother

****Reverse the order for entry out of the school****

Students will now once again be able to use hooks this year. Students do not need to change their shoes upon entering the building. Individual teachers will provide direction around this. 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 (or hooks). 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.

Greeters

One greeter at each student entry point. They will check that students are wearing masks and will squirt hand sanitizer into each student's hand.

School Day

Our school day is structured as follows:

Period 1	8:55 – 9:45
Period 2	9:45 – 10:35
Snack (1)	10:35 – 10:55
Recess (2)	
Snack (2)	10:55 – 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 – 1:35
Recess (1)	
Period 5	1:35 – 2:25
Period 6	2:25 – 3:15

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.

Students may go to their home for lunch (grades 4-8). They are not to go to a public establishment during lunchtime to help reduce the chances of COVID transmission. Students will eat in their classrooms.

Students will be assigned an area to play in at recess and a rotation schedule has been 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 (Eat, Recess):

Bullock, Verbeek (KDG)
Pratt, Pipe/Girard
Fairbrother, Black
Gellatly, Wells
Stroeder, Hassen

Group 2 (Recess, Eat):

Raben, Doig (KDG)
Zavitz, Paquette
S. Reinhart, Pilbeam
Evans, Sinclair
Fairman, Lange

Students 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. A rotation for the month of September has been sent to staff members.

Playground structures and sandboxes will be closed to start the school year, due to physical distancing and cleaning concerns. Students may play in the playground area (woodchips), just not on the equipment at this time.

Zone 1: Hard top
Zone 2: Soccer field
Zone 3: South of soccer field, east of portables (see map)
Zone 4: West of portables (see map)

Cones will be placed in the field area to help with boundaries.

End of the day

Student belongings should be taken home each day to be cleaned as needed.

Walkers will be dismissed first. Walkers will use their regular designated doors at dismissal. We will stagger dismissal with classrooms closer to the exit doors leaving first. After the walkers have exited the building, an announcement will be made for the bus students to move to their line up spot; teachers will share this information with their students.

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.

Parent Pick Up/Drop Off

Parents are not allowed into the school to pick up or drop off their children. Parents will need to call the school 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.

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 gym or library access except for those students assigned to these spaces (kdg).
- No trips, no extra-curricular activities (unless virtually).
- No school photos.
- Breakfast and Snack programs will start the year with food delivery to student homes, and will not happen at school. Food will be in a 'Grab-and-Go' format (we will try to have some snacks available in each classroom for those students that need them). For further information, please contact the Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington.

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.