



**Evergreen Heights Education Centre**  
2510 Hwy. 592, Box 149, Emsdale, Ontario, POA IJ0



September 4, 2020

Dear Evergreen Families,

As we look ahead to the first week of school, we are excited to be welcoming back your children and our students.

We appreciate your ongoing patience, flexibility and understanding as we have been working through the many new policies and safety protocols for this year. Our priority is the wellbeing and safety of every student, staff member and visitor who walks through our doors. During the first week of school we will be sending home the Family Handbook that contains detailed messages regarding school operations. This letter will outline the most relevant information your family will need as you prepare to begin school next week. I do apologize for the length of this letter, but wanted to ensure you had the information you needed.

Before the start of the school year, please ensure that you have read the Near North District School Board *Return to School Guidance Document for Parents and Guardians* that can be found on the board website ([www.nearnorthschools.ca](http://www.nearnorthschools.ca)). This document will continue to be updated as needed, and was most recently updated September 6<sup>th</sup>.

#### DAILY SELF-SCREENING FOR EACH CHILD

Student safety and well-being are the number one priority as we return to our school. Self-screening your children at home prior to them coming to school each day is critical for our school communities to be pro-active in preventing and reducing the spread of COVID-19. While consistent attendance is important, if your child is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms, your child should stay home and consult your family physician.

Each day, parents/guardians are to complete an assessment of their child's health before they go to school. Please click on the link to access the Government of Ontario COVID self-assessment page (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>) or use the NNDSB self-screening checklist attached with this letter.

If the answerS to all of the self-screening questions are "No," then your child will be able to enter our school building. If you answer "Yes" to any of the questions, please do not send your child to school or enter the school.

Please know that all staff will be required to pass the same self-assessment each day and will only be able to report to work if they have likewise responded "No" to each of the questions.

## MASKS

On the bus, students aged 5 and up will be required to wear face coverings/masks (NBPSHU).

At school, students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged to wear masks in indoor spaces. Students in grades 4 to 8 will be required to wear masks indoors on school property.

## SCHOOL START TIME, SCHOOL ENTRANCES AND STUDENT DROP-OFF:

The school day will begin at 8:25 a.m.

### *Bussing:*

Buses will arrive and students will begin disembarking at 8:10 a.m. Buses will unload one at a time. Students will enter the school by one of the following locations:

- Grades 1, 2, 2/3, 3/4, and 4/5 will enter by the Cedar Court bus entrance doors;
- ELK-A, ELK-B, Grades 6/7 and 7/8 will enter by the front entrance doors.

### *Parents/Guardians Dropping off Students:*

To ensure the safety of all students as buses unload and depart, we request that students be dropped off no earlier than 8:15 a.m. Students being dropped off should enter the entrance assigned to their grade (see above).

If dropping off your child after 8:25 a.m. (the start of the school day), you are welcome to walk your child to the second set of doors only. Please buzz the office for your child to enter the school. Your child will sanitize, check in at the office, and go directly to their classroom.

## SCHOOL DISMISSAL AND STUDENT PICK-UP:

The school day finishes at 2:45 p.m.

### *Bussing*

Buses will load one at a time to ensure the safety of our students.

### *Parents/Guardians Picking up Students:*

Student pick-ups will begin at 2:45 p.m. (dismissal time) at the side gymnasium doors. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign out their child(ren) before they will be dismissed to you. We kindly ask that you respect social distancing of 2 metres outside the school building while waiting to sign out your child. As well, to ensure the safe loading and departure of our buses, we ask that there be no student pick-ups between 2:30 and 2:45 p.m.

If it is necessary to pick up your child earlier than 2:30 p.m., you will need to notify the office through a phone call or email to our secretary, Mrs. Jessica Melick ([jessica.davutovic@nearnorthschools.ca](mailto:jessica.davutovic@nearnorthschools.ca)) to make the necessary arrangements.

## SCHOOL ENTRY VIDEO:

Please see the school website page (<https://www.nearnorthschools.ca/evergreen-heights/>) and our Facebook page for a welcome video you can share with your children. The video highlights entry to the school for the first day, and may help decrease some anxiety regarding this year's first day entry.

## NUTRITION BREAKS AND RECESS

Nutrition breaks and recesses will be staggered. While some classes are eating their snack/lunch, others will be outside for recess.

*Nutrition Breaks:*

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Hand washing will happen before and after eating. Please note that a policy of not sharing food will be enforced. Please pack litter-less lunches. All uneaten food items must go home with students at the end of the day.

Students should bring a water bottle that can be refilled throughout the day.

*Recesses:*

The playground will have designated areas of play for each cohort to minimize contact with other students from outside of their instructional cohort. While outside, a social distance of 1 metre must be maintained between students. Students will exit to and enter from recess using the designated doors for their classroom.

OUTSIDE LEARNING

As much as possible, we will be taking advantage of the incredible outdoor space that we have for outdoor learning and gym classes. Please ensure that your children come to school dressed for the weather.

STUDENT BELONGINGS

Students will keep all personal belongings with them in the classroom at their designated personal space. Everything brought to school in the morning must go home again in the afternoon. As such, personal belongings brought to school should be minimized.

CLASS PLACEMENTS

All class placements will be shared by email and phone with families by Tuesday, September 8, 2020 in advance of the start of school. If you did not receive this message by noon on Tuesday, please contact the school office and we will give you your child's class placement.

Please contact the school if you have any questions about our September Back to School plan.

Thank you again for your patience, understanding and support as we prepare to begin a new school year in such unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Marshall Gray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light blue rectangular stamp.

P. Marshall Gray, Principal  
Evergreen Heights Education Centre