



Dear, Near North District School Board (NND SB) Families.

We appreciate that you have many questions and are looking for as much information as possible to help you plan for the upcoming school year. We have been working all summer on plans for the safe return of your child(ren) to school and are committed to making continual revisions as the Covid-19 situation evolves. Provincial and local authorities are providing regular updated information and direction; therefore, the plans of all school boards are subject to change on an ongoing basis.

In our planning, the health and well-being of our students and staff members remains prominent. Based on the Ministry of Education's announcement of July 30th and the ongoing advice from public health, we can share the following information with families today.

### **Reopening Registration**

As outlined in a School Messenger email on July 27, 2020 we asked that all families complete a survey, [Click here to access the NND SB Survey](#), to indicate your intention for each of your children to attend school in person or through online remote learning. If you have not completed the survey, please click the link above and complete a separate form for each child attending our schools. As the situation continues to evolve the NND SB recognises that parents may wish to make different choices than they had previously. Should you wish to change what you have previously indicated you may do so by filling out the survey again and any previous responses will be deleted.

For those eligible for transportation, the form also includes the ability to opt-out of this service. Where possible, parents are asked to arrange their own transportation to and from school for their children.

***Please complete this form for each child by August 14, 2020 by 5:00 p.m.***

### **Updates**

We will continue to share information with you regularly and update our NND SB website with information about health and safety protocols and re-opening information as it becomes available from Provincial and or local authorities.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the Return to School NND SB Survey, again here is the link [NND SB Survey](#). The information will help inform our planning and be used to support the development of remote learning for students.

The Near North District School thanks families for their on-going patience and understanding as we work to finalize learning models that will best support student safety and student achievement and well-being, while meeting Ministry of Education and public health guidelines. NND SB school communities have missed our students and look forward to welcoming them back to school in September.



# School Re-Entry Information Sheet for Families

*August 11, 2020*

Every day in-school learning with enhanced public health measures.

The health, safety and well-being of students, staff and families is our main priority as we re-open schools. This information sheet outlines important factors in our current return to school model with enhanced public health measures. It has been created with direction from the Ministry of Education and guidance from the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (NBPSDHU). The strategies listed below will help make our schools safer for everyone.

## Guiding Principles



Prioritize health and safety



Support well-being



Ensure equity of access for  
students, staff and families



Foster innovative learning  
opportunities



Be adaptable and flexible



Be financially sustainable

## Health and Safety Measures

- Students Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear masks indoors on school property.
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged but not required to wear masks in indoor spaces.
- School-based staff who are regularly in close contact with students will be provided with all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- All staff and students must self-screen every day before attending school. If students or staff experience any symptoms, they must stay home from school. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

- Frequent and proper hand washing is one of the main recommended actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Frequent hand hygiene will take place throughout the day.
  - Students will be required to wash their hands before and after nutritional breaks and when returning from outdoor learning or play.
  - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available throughout the school including gym entrances, hallways etc., to promote hand hygiene when entering and leaving the school.
  - Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing into one's sleeve) will be respected, and reminders will be placed throughout the school.
- Desks will be assigned to students and will allow for as much distance as possible between each student.
- Items will not be shared between students.
- Personal belongings brought to school should be minimized.
- In school traffic flows and procedures will be designated to maintain physical distancing.
- Class movement through the school will be staggered to limit the amount of traffic in hallways.
- Increased cleaning and sanitizing measures will be in place.
- The local health unit will lead any contact tracing and communication of positive COVID-19 cases.

## Mental Health and Well-Being

- Educators will incorporate academic accommodations and supports for students who may be having difficulty concentrating or learning new information due to stress associated with the pandemic.
- The Mental Health and Well-Being Team will provide in-person and on-line services to students as needed.
- Students identified as having high needs special education and mental health needs will be provided with transition activities/programming during the last two weeks of summer prior to school opening.

## Attendance Procedures

- A parent survey distributed on July 29, 2020 provided the information regarding student readiness to return to school. Students who do not attend school in-person will be provided with learning materials to participate in distance education.  
[To access the survey click here.](#)
- All staff and students must complete a self-assessment prior to attending school. Any staff or student who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Students and staff who begin to exhibit symptoms during the school will be isolated

## Learning Environments

### **Elementary**

Elementary school students Kindergarten to Grade 8 will attend school five days per week remaining in one cohort for the full day, including recess and lunch. Changes in the timing of recesses, lunches and bathroom breaks will be staggered to support cohorting where applicable.

### **Secondary**

Secondary students will attend school five days per week with enhanced health and safety protocols. All schools will adopt timetabling methods that emphasize cohorting of students as much as possible, to limit the number of direct and indirect contacts. Secondary schools will adopt a quadmester model, four segments to the school year, to emphasize cohorting of students. In the quadmester model students will take two credits at a time.

## Transportation

- Active forms of travel (e.g., walking and cycling) and private transportation by parents and caregivers, are encouraged where possible.
- Families should be aware that physical distancing on buses may not be possible enhancing the need for masks for students. Masks will be mandatory for Grades 4-12 students and encouraged for K- Grade 3 students.
- Families indicated in the survey / registration process if their child(ren) will be taking school board transportation if eligible.

## Visitors

- Visitors to the school will be limited personnel who provide essential services to students and student nutrition volunteers.
- All visitors will be required to complete a self-assessment before entering school.
- All visitors will be required to sign in to enter a school or board office.

## Communication with Parents

We are committed to clear, open and transparent communication with our families. The current situation with COVID-19 is ever changing. The NNDSB is in constant consultation with the Ministry of Education and our local Health Unit. We will be communicating with families in the following ways:

- Regular updates posted to our website;
- Direct communication to families through the School Messenger platform;
- Direct communication from the school and classroom teachers.

July 30<sup>th</sup> Letter from the Ministry [Click here.](#)

NNDSB Survey [Click here](#)



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## Communiqué

Dear Parents/Guardians

NPSSTS staff have been working on the 2020-2021 school year student transportation needs since March with the member school boards. We continued this work throughout the closures to ensure that we are ready for multiple options. We have been consulting with our 33 counterparts from across the Province to develop best practices, identify challenges, and brainstorm potential solutions and share information with Boards and the Ministry. At the same time, we have implemented plans for a safe return to work for key operational staff in order that they may better collaborate in preparing routes under a variety of circumstances.

Discussions with Boards are ongoing. Boards will be reaching out to you to solicit information that is critical to schools and student transportation planning. We encourage you to complete the questionnaires as soon as they are received and return them promptly in order to facilitate the next steps in planning. This will improve our ability to get information back to you in a timely fashion.

We anticipate that despite your child being eligible for transportation, you may choose to drive them to school. If you do so, we encourage you to consider a drop off and pick up point that is a block or two from the school, having regard for the capacity of your child to walk that distance. This will take pressure of the amount of traffic in the school zones. You can practice this with your children over the weeks remaining in the summer holiday.

As masks in public places and public transportation are mandated by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit effective July 24<sup>th</sup>, it is recommended that you start readying your child by practicing this, and other protective measures already in place like physical distancing, hand washing, cough and sneeze hygiene and others as recommended. Normalizing these behaviours is important in ensuring the safety of all those around us, including their classmates, teachers, and bus drivers.

We are living in an ever-changing landscape and we must remain vigilant in continuing the good habits that have contributed to our success in flattening the curve, not allow complacency to set in, and above all, be flexible and adaptive to change. As you would with inclement weather, have a plan B and even a plan C in place to deal with sudden changes as they arise.

Transportation services will be different this year. There are only so many buses and drivers and over 11,000 students who are eligible to ride. Subject to decisions made at the Ministry and Board levels and the restrictions that may apply, as well as the demand on our services, adjustments may be necessary. Again, this is why a thorough and expedient return of questionnaires coming from the school boards is vital.

Please be reassured that we will do all that is humanly possible within the constraints that we are up against to meet the needs of everyone, having regard for the health and safety of all concerned.

Chuck Seguin  
Executive Director, NPSSTS



**Consortium Members**  
**Membres du consortium**

