



DOUGLAS SCHOOL

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Welcoming Students Back to Douglas School: Top 12 Things Families Need to Know!

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Dear Douglas families,

I want to thank you for your patience and understanding in awaiting our school specific plans for the upcoming school year. Things are going to be different this year and we want everyone back at school healthy and safe.

As we get ready for the return to in-class learning, our current Pandemic situation requires several changes to school procedures and routines to comply with Public Health Regulations. Our divisional plan on the RRSD Website was sent out by email and our complete Return to School Plan will be available on the school website this week.

Considering busy family situations, here is a "Top 12" List of Key Items parents need to know for the beginning of the **2020/ 2021** school year.

1. **As per Public Health, the use of non-medical masks is mandatory in all schools for students in grades 4 to 12, staff and visitors when physical distancing is not possible. Grade 3 students who are in a grade 3-4 multi age classroom are encouraged to wear masks as well.**
Note: grade 3 students in multi-age classrooms will be provided non-medical masks for voluntary wear when social distancing (2 metres) is not possible. Students in grades K-2 may also wear a mask. Outdoor activities can be a "mask break" during the day as long as physical distancing can be maintained. Our first few days will be focused on building our class communities and teaching students how to participate in school safely.
2. **Screening protocols** – All parents must screen their children (family) every morning. If a child is sick, please **DO NOT** send them to school. You can call health links and they will advise you of your next steps. The number for **Health Links is: 204 788 8200 or 1 888 315 9257**
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
3. During recess periods and lunch breaks students will be assigned to recess cohorts of smaller numbers (to support contact tracing) and will play in designated playground areas. as per Public Health Directives. **All students from K-8 will be going outside for recess and lunch breaks (weather permitting).**
4. **Student entry and exit from the school at the beginning and end of the day will be structured.** More information regarding student entry will be given in the full school plan.
5. **Parent and public access to the school will be restricted.** Parents are asked to remain outside of the school and use the intercom system at the front of the school if you require access. **For the first week of school,** students will meet their homeroom teachers outside, on the

Playground, and begin practicing safe and controlled student entry on the first day (to promote physical distancing).

6. **Lunch and breakfast program** – Our milk program will be suspended for 2020/ 2021 the school year. **There will be limited access to microwaves, so students will mostly need to pack food items that do not need to be heated.** Students will eat lunches in their own classroom. Weather permitting, there may some opportunity to take students outside to eat. No sharing of food will be permitted. A daily **breakfast program** that is congruent with public health guidelines is being developed and will be served in each classroom.
7. **All classrooms have been configured to allow for a minimum of 1 meter spacing of student desks.** Other areas of the school have been adapted to provide for additional, supervised, learning spaces. We will have cohorts of students who will be kept together throughout the school day to minimize contacts within the school day.
8. **Student supplies and personal belongings need to be kept secure and not shared amongst students.** Students are discouraged from bringing personal toys, stuffed animals, etc. to school, as they cannot be adequately monitored by staff. Student supplies will be clearly labeled. Anything coming from home along with personal items (Lunch kit, backpack, boots, etc.) should be clearly labeled if possible.
9. **Sanitization** – All frequently touched surfaces, washrooms, equipment etc. will be sanitized twice per day. Increased hand washing and hygiene practices will be taught to students. **Water fountains will be closed and students are required to bring their own labeled water bottle from home.** We have water filling stations in the school to allow for refills.
10. **Phys-Ed classes** will be outside as much as possible, although the school gym will still be utilized for extra space as scheduling permits.
11. As it is deemed a non-essential service, there will be **no school photos** for the 2020-21 school year.
12. **In-person tours of Douglas School for parents and children will be offered prior to September 8** for students experiencing a heightened sense of anxiety about the return. Teachers will be calling families to talk about returning to school. Appointments for tours can be made at this time for Sept 3rd& 4th. No tours without an appointment please.

Staff are working on a detailed school plan that will be posted on our Douglas School website on September 4th. We will also be posting a virtual tour with pictures and videos.

Please know that we continue to be responsive to the current Public Health directives and will communicate any updates/ adjustments to our plans as directed by the school division in response to Provincial guidelines. Your flexibility and understanding are greatly appreciated.

We look forward to a different, but safe and exciting start to the 2020/ 2021 school year.

Kindest Regards,

Lindsay Judd Hill – Principal Douglas Elementary School

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