



January 14, 2022

Dear Families,

Our Catholic learning communities are busy preparing to receive students back to in-person learning on Monday, January 17, 2022. At this time, we would like to share with you some important information that will help you to prepare. In addition, we are sharing some of the additional measures that we will implement to keep all staff and students safe as we return to in-person learning.

### **Student Well-Being**

We can all agree that this pandemic has been difficult, and we are so proud of our students, staff and families for their resiliency during these last 2 years. In reference to our pastoral theme “**Beloved Children of God**”, the focus for the first week back is to support our students through ‘God’s soft and loving eyes’. In essence, another “soft-start” will support our students in their transition back to class and those staying home in the short-term.

### **Government Screening Tool**

Please ensure you access and use the Government of Ontario’s screener daily before sending your child(ren) to school. The screener can be found here with details and explanations regarding symptoms. [COVID-19 School Screening](#) Please note that this screener has been updated as of January 12, 2022, and it is imperative we all follow the new guidelines in the screener to assess your child(ren)’s readiness to attend school each day. Families should check regularly online for the most recent version of the screener. Schools will also be completing active screening measures with staff and students daily, until further notice.

### **Presumptive Positive and Positive COVID-19 Cases in Schools**

Our Catholic school board will work proactively with Public Health regarding COVID-19 management in schools and communicate as appropriate. We will continue to provide updated information on Ministry guidance on reporting cases as it becomes available. Ensure you check our social media platforms and websites for updated protocols.

### **Temporary Move to Online Learning**

In the event of a high number of student absences (cohort or school), or staffing challenges associated with staff absences, Principals may make the decision to TEMPORARILY move classes to online learning until absences decline and safe supervision can be maintained. The Family of School Superintendent of Education and my office, in consultation with the school Principal, and Public Health, will make the decision to close a school and move to remote learning. Any of these scenarios will be communicated by school Principals and my office as required and/or as necessary.

**Learning Options effective Monday January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

<b>Learning Mode</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Return to In-Person Learning (elementary and secondary).</b>	Students may return to their home school classroom in-person.
<b>Return to Elementary Remote Learning School.</b>	Students that are currently registered in the Elementary Remote Learning School continue in this format.
<b>Families Waiting to Monitor Case Counts Before Returning to in-person learning (short-term until February 1, 2022).</b>	At elementary (K-8) classroom teachers will continue to support students by posting daily work (asynchronously).
	At secondary (9-12) students can continue to join remotely into their classes via Teams (hybrid learning model) until the end of Quadmester 2.
<b>Families Wanting to Transition to Remote Learning (long term)</b>	Families must complete the survey below to make this request for elementary and secondary students.
	Elementary students (grades K-8) can access daily asynchronous work from their classroom teacher’s D2L page for the week of January 17 <sup>th</sup> . From January 24 <sup>th</sup> – February 1 <sup>st</sup> , students will be provided with a grade-specific learning package accessible from their classroom teachers D2L page. Students who are able to be placed in the Elementary Remote Learning School will begin on February 3 <sup>rd</sup> .
	Secondary (grades 9-12) students can continue to join remotely into their classes via Teams (hybrid learning model) until the end of Quadmester 2. For those students requesting a move to remote learning for Quadmester 3, please complete the survey below.

**Student Masks**

As part of Public Health actions to help curb the spread of COVID-19 and its variants, the Ministry of Education is providing a limited supply of optional 3-ply cloth masks to schools in the coming days as an alternative for students to wear. Students can also continue to wear their own masks from home. We anticipate that the 3-ply masks will be available at the school office during the first week of school. These masks are intended to last students approximately 20 washes or four weeks per mask.

## **Technology**

During the first week, we ask that students do not return any technology to school that was previously sent home. This is to ensure equity amongst all our students and to be ready if a student is ill and needs to access asynchronous material from their D2L page. As we progress through the first few weeks back, additional information regarding the return of technology will be shared by the school Principal.

## **SEA Equipment for Students with Special Education Needs**

We recognize that students with special education needs that currently are supplied with SEA equipment can continue to follow their normal practice of bringing their technology to school each day.

## **Move to Remote School – Family Survey**

During the first few weeks back to in-person learning, students will be able to access asynchronous learning materials posted by their classroom teacher daily. Families requesting a long-term move to either the Elementary Remote Learning school (grade k-8) or to remote learning in Secondary (grade 9-12) are asked to complete the following survey by January 20, 2022. [Survey](#)

**NOTE: if your child is currently enrolled in the Board’s Elementary Remote Learning School, you do NOT need to complete the survey.** The survey is only for families requesting a move from in-person learning at a bricks and mortar school to the Elementary Remote Learning school for the rest of the 2021-22 school year.

## **Testing Kits**

The Minister of Education announced that families will have access to **two** Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) per student upon return to in-person learning on January 17<sup>th</sup>. The Ministry of Education will be deploying these tests over the coming days, however, accessing these tests may be delayed. Testing should only be done if your child is showing symptoms

## **Cohorting**

As the Omicron variant continues to spread, it is important for students to always remain in their class cohorts determined by the school. This includes outdoor time and lunch time. Assemblies will remain virtual until further notice.

## **Athletics/Extracurriculars**

All athletics and extracurricular activities will be paused for two weeks and will be reassessed at the end of January.

Our commitment to the ongoing safety and well-being of our staff and students is at the forefront of our planning as we welcome students back to our schools. Our Catholic school board will continue to build faith-filled learning communities where each member is loved, inspired, and successful.

May God bless you and keep you safe.

***“Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.” I Corinthians 16:13***

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. DeSantis".

David DeSantis, Director of Education

