

Return to School for Elementary Students: Guidelines for Parents

As you are all aware, the Covid-19 pandemic has provided all of us with many changes and challenges. As we prepare for the re-opening of our elementary schools, it is important to share the guidelines that have been put in place to ensure that we are following all directives as issued by the provincial authorities in health and education. Please take time to review these guidelines; should you require clarification you may check in with your individual school, or if you prefer you may address your concern or question to WQQuestions@wqsb.qc.ca. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation, as they are both fundamental in ensuring a safe and successful re-opening of our schools.

Student Attendance and Registration

In order to facilitate school and class room organization and planning parents must:

- Provide the school with a 1-week notice, in writing, of their intention to send their child to school.
- This notification must respect the deadline which will be established and communicated by individual schools

Transportation

- Parents are strongly encouraged to provide transportation for their children wherever possible. In the event transportation is required however, parents must notify the school when confirming attendance.
- This notification must be provided in writing at least one week in advance
- Transportation notifications must respect the established deadline of Monday before 4:00 pm (for the following week)
- Bus route information will be communicated to parents on Friday, May 8th
- In order to respect Ministry directives regarding social distancing, the following maximum capacities are in place:
 - Regular bus: 12 students
 - Mini-bus: 5 students
 - Van: 1 student
- Seating plans have been established for all buses; seats will be identified with tape, indicating seats that are not to be used
- Students will be asked to sit next to the window
- Only students who have been registered with their respective schools will be permitted on buses
- Bus drivers will be wearing protective equipment (i.e. Mask, protective eyewear, gloves)
- The transportation companies will be disinfecting all buses

Drop-Off Procedures

- In order to respect the Santé Publique directives regarding social distancing, schools will have established drop off and pick up points for those parents transporting their children. These will be conveyed to you by your individual school.

Hand Washing Procedures

- Hand sanitizers will be set up at entry and exit points of schools. Students must wash their hands upon entry and exit of the building. Additional hand washing areas will be set up within the school to ensure that students use proper handwashing throughout the day.



Entry and Exit Procedures

- Individual schools will establish entry and exit procedures for students; it is fundamentally important that these be followed at all times
- Parents and visitors are not permitted inside the school; individual schools will designate an area and procedure for parents who are dropping their children off in the morning and picking their children up at the end of the day.
- Please note that procedures will be posted at main entrances of schools

Social Distancing

- All students must respect social distancing rules. They must remain 2 meters apart in all areas of the school and school yard. Staff will ensure that students understand what this entails and signage will be in place to help guide students. As parents you are encouraged to reinforce this at home by practicing with your child.
- All classrooms have been set up with a 10-student maximum

Emergency Contacts in Case of Illness or Symptoms

- In the event your child is ill or exhibits symptoms of Covid-19 as defined by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) they will be accompanied to a room designated solely for this purpose
- A parent will be contacted immediately by the school and asked to pick up their child; during the conversation with the parent, a summary of the exhibited symptoms will be shared
- The child will be provided with and asked to wear a mask, and given instruction on how to put it on (as per INSPQ guidelines)
- The child will remain supervised in the room until the parent or designated emergency contact arrives at school to take the child home

Caretaking

- The WQSB Buildings department has put a number of additional measures in place, as per Santé Publique and Health Canada guidelines; namely:
 - Tables with hand sanitizer will be set up at the main entrance of all schools
 - Only sanitizer with at least 65% alcohol is being used in our schools
 - All classrooms and daycare rooms will be disinfected at the beginning and end of each day
 - Caretaking staff will clean and disinfect washrooms as per the established schedule below:
 - ☐ Following the beginning of first class
 - ☐ Following morning recess
 - ☐ Following lunch period
 - ☐ Following afternoon recess
 - ☐ At the end of each day
 - Caretaking staff will monitor and replenish all hand sanitizer and soap dispensers as per the above-listed schedule
 - Caretaking staff will focus on maintaining overall school cleanliness; particular emphasis will be placed on door handles, railings, light switches, and other high –touch areas
 - All desks and chairs will be cleaned and disinfected every evening
 - All classrooms that are being used will be cleaned every evening

Lunches

- Parents are asked to provide a lunch and snacks for their children; lunches are not to be dropped off during the day as we must restrict access to all of our buildings
- Please note that no schools will be operating a cafeteria or lunch service
- Schools with provincially funded Milk Programs will continue to provide this service

School/Class Organization

- It is important to understand the school and class organization will be different than prior to the school closures. The social distancing rules require a reorganization of classes to reduce the number of students. This may mean that your child is not with the same classmates or, in some cases the same teacher. You will receive more information from your child's school.

Respect of School Rules

- Social and physical distancing make it necessary for all schools to revise their operating rules and procedures. While each school will take the necessary time to review these rules with all returning students, parents are asked to spend time reminding their children of the importance of respecting them. It is essential that all students understand that by working with all staff to respect and follow all rules and guidelines **they are making a huge contribution to the overall safety and health of everyone in the building.**
- **Students who choose to disregard rules regarding social and physical distancing will be sent home, as this disregard for all others in the school is not only irresponsible but also intolerable. Anything less would be compromising the security of everyone in the building. This rule applies to bus transportation as well.**

FAQ's

- Can my child wear a mask at school?
 - While children will not be provided with masks or other protective materials, parents may choose to have their children use them; parents are reminded to ensure that in the event their children are wearing a mask that they have been instructed on how to properly use them
- Will the school or school board test students for Covid-19?
 - As per directives from INSPQ, the schools and school board will not be testing students
- Will students share computers or other materials at school?
 - Classroom materials (ie. books, computers, etc.) will not be shared between students;
- What happens if a school has a confirmed case of Covid-19?
 - In the event one of our schools has a confirmed case of Covid-19, the following measures will be put into place immediately:
 - The school board will enter into and remain in communication and consultation with Santé Publique; all directives and procedures will be issued by Santé Publique and adhered to by the school board
 - Parents of all students in the school will be informed that there is a confirmed Covid-19 case; the name of the student or staff member will not be released as per legal rules and regulations
 - As the school board receives situation-specific instructions from Santé Publique, it will ensure that both the parent and staff communities remain apprised of the situation at hand

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES COVID-19 PERIOD

STUDENT POSTCARDS

Bus routes will be completed by Friday and postcards will be sent to the schools. Schools will communicate the information to parents.

MAXIMUM CAPACITY – VEHICLE TYPE

To respect the 2 meter physical distance, the maximum capacity per vehicles will be:

- Full size bus: = 12 students
- Mini-bus = 5 students
- Van = 1 student

SEATING PLAN

A seating plan has been organized in every bus to respect the required social distancing between students. The seats will be identified with tape to indicate to students where they cannot seat.

A seating plan for boarding and unloading has been established.

Students will be asked to sit close to the window side of the seat.

Students are expected to respect the seating plan and keep their assigned seat for the remainder of the school year. Students not respecting the rules will be expelled from the bus.

TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS

Only registered students will be allowed on buses.

Future registrations may be accepted conditional to space availability on the existing routes and it must not alter the existing schedule time.

TRANSPORTATION COMPANIES - DRIVERS

Drivers will have personal protective equipment such as: mask, protective eye wear and gloves.

Transportation company are responsible to disinfect their vehicle twice a day.



Bording order

Driver	
	12
11	
	10
9	
	8
7	
	6
5	
	4
3	
	2
1	

Unloading order

Driver	
	1
2	
	3
4	
	5
6	
	7
8	
	9
10	
	11
12	

Bording order

Driver	
	5
4	
	3
2	
	1

Unloading order

Driver	
	1
2	
	3
4	
	5

WQSB Guidelines to support the return to school for students with special needs – EHDAA

- WQSB Measures to support students and staff – April/May 2020
- Guidelines for planning, organization of staff, environments, equipment, materials, interventions

With the gradual re-entry of students in elementary schools, many questions arise in regards to students identified as EHDAA, and those who have complex special needs. We have received guidelines to address some of the questions that have arisen. We await further direction, as noted below.

Who is recommended to continue to stay home?

- Students who have chronic medical conditions, or who are considered vulnerable to COVID-19 should remain at home.
- Some parents may choose to continue to keep their children at home, as attendance is optional.
- No student may be refused access to school.

How will students who are identified as EHDAA, be supported?

- Students who return to school will be supported by school teams.
- Students who will remain at home, will continue to be supported at home, as they have been:
 - Educational learning kits, distant learning/consolidation of learning
 - WQSB My Backpack
 - Remote support of Comp Services staff where applicable
 - Weekly contact by school – close monitoring of needs – academic and social/emotional – see guidelines re. Communication with students

How will social distancing be supported at school?

- Social distancing must be supported and respected between all individuals (staff and students).
- Schools will determine the particular needs and strategies to employ and how services will be organized (based on their particular reality).
- Strategies must be adapted to our students' particular needs and the school reality.
- In cases where one on one is required or proximity of school personnel is necessary, personnel will have PPE (personal protective equipment) and have basic training on its proper use. (see Workplace Guide for Schools – when social distancing is not able to be maintained for more than 15 minutes/day, PPE (mask and goggles, must be worn)
- Classes, may need to be re-arranged, or relocated to allow for social distancing.

What services will be provided for students who are identified as EDHAA?

- Depending on the particular needs of the students, some adjustments may be required to support students. This may involve remote support for educational activities (phone, Teams).
- IEPs for the current year may be revised in terms of strategies and adaptations, as needed.
- Complementary Services member support is available remotely (dependent on current directives from Public Health). Department members are available to support staff working with students with special needs. This may include SLP, Speech and Hearing Correction Officers, ASD Special Ed Technicians, Social Services Officers, DART, Social Worker, Re-Adaptation Officer, Psychologist, Special Needs Consultants. At this time, no school visits will be planned to minimize community transmission risks.
- Therapy, evaluations and any direct service is suspended, under current Public Health directives. A number of innovative practices are being considered should they become necessary. Contact with students/parents

and remote support has been underway since student communications began. This support will be maintained.

- As the current situation continues, greater attention and monitoring may be necessary to address mental health and well-being. Students who present with signs of anxiety or distress should be monitored closely for possible follow-up and referrals. Pro-active approaches to well-being and positive mental health should be considered at a whole class or school level. Supportive materials and resources are available from Complementary Services, and the Centres of Excellence.

What other measures need to be considered?

- For students who use technology, manipulatives, and other learning tools during their day, cleaning and disinfection procedures need to be enhanced. In general, sharing of tools is to be avoided.
- Special transportation must follow current Public Health Directives for social distancing, resulting in reduced numbers of students per trip. Parents are encouraged to drive their children where possible.

What about special classes?

- We have three special classes at the elementary level (Chelsea, Aylmer and Transitions Centres) which will need to adapt supports and procedures to ensure Public Health Directives are followed.
- Social distancing continues to be enforced and class size maximum will be reduced to allow for more available space.

WQSB Protocol for Symptoms of COVID 19

Students and Staff

- WQSB Measures to support students and staff – May 7, 2020
- Guidelines for symptom monitoring, procedures, follow up

With the gradual re-entry of students in elementary schools, the following is intended to support the monitoring for symptoms, and steps to take in the event of the presence of COVID 19 symptoms in schools.

Any staff or student experiencing symptoms or illness, must stay home or go home once observed. This is a change in work/school practice that is essential to maintain Public Health guidelines currently in place. **No individual should be coming to work/school if sick, no matter how mild the symptoms.**

Symptoms may include (<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/answers-questions-coronavirus-covid19/>) :

- Cold and flu like symptoms including:
 - Fever
 - Onset or worsening of a cough
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Sudden loss of smell without nasal congestion with or without loss of taste
 - Sore throat
 - Headache
 - Aching muscles
 - Intense fatigue
 - Major loss of appetite
 - Diarrhea

What to do in the case of staff or student presenting with symptoms:

- if a staff member presents with symptoms, they must inform administration and leave immediately
- if a student presents with symptoms, the student will be taken to the identified isolation room and can be supervised by one adult (isolation room and PPE expectations outlined in CNESST protocol and Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for Schools); maintain stringent handwashing procedures and PPE disposal or disinfection
 - parent is called for pick-up (belongings to be given to parents in plastic bag)
 - parent is instructed to contact COVID 19 helpline for further instructions (see cards and Public Health guides). Info cards can be printed and provided for parents to take with them.
 - The parents of the preschool or elementary students of the affected child's group, the staff member responsible for the isolation and the group's educator/teacher must call 1-877-644-4545 to obtain instructions from the Direction de la Santé publique (public health authorities).
- administration calls CISSS School info line for any further directions
- areas where the student or staff member was located should be disinfected as per protocols for disinfection (see CNESST protocol for details)
- in the case of siblings or those sharing same residence of person who is exhibiting symptoms, they too must stay home.

What's next?

- Public Health is responsible for all follow up in regards to possible testing, and further investigations. Schools do not take any further interventions without direction from Public Health.

- If a case is confirmed, Public Health is responsible for any and all follow up. Administrators will be contacted in such an event for further investigation or procedures.
- Administrators can contact the CISSS School Info line for any questions arising.

When is the staff member/student permitted to return to school?

- Staff and students are not to return until they are symptom free.
- (excerpt from Public Health pamphlet/self-care guide) In general, you need to home-isolate for 14 days after the onset of symptoms, and:
 - Until you are free of fever for at least 48 hours (without taking fever medication) and
 - Have no acute symptoms for at least 24 hours (this does not include cough and loss of smell, which can take a longer time to go away).
- For cases where there is a chronic medical, or other condition (that is not a vulnerability for COVID-19), a parent may provide medical note to support their return.

What about students with more complex special needs?

- Social distancing is maintained where possible, and where not, staff will wear PPE and ensure proper hand washing, etc. and PPE guidelines are followed.
- In special classes, class size maximums may be reduced to accommodate more space and an appropriate student:staff ratio.
- For toileting and personal care – staff must wear PPE and ensure proper handwashing, and disinfection procedures.

Questions?

- Provincial Coronavirus Info line - **1-877-644-4545**

Sincerely,



GEORGE SINGFIELD

Secretary General – Director of Corporate Services and Communication