

November 24, 2021

Dear Families:

**Updates on the school year, COVID-19 screening, vaccinations, inclement weather and travelling over the holidays**

It's hard to believe that we are already three months into the school year. Learning is well underway at HPEDSB, as I have seen first-hand when I visited all schools over the past few months. Thank you for your ongoing support of your child's school.

This letter is an update on several topics connected to your child's education from now until the December break and into January.

**ELEMENTARY PROGRESS REPORTS:** If your child is in elementary school, you should have received a paper copy of their Early Progress Report. Please contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

**SECONDARY PROGRAMMING:** For secondary school students, the first quadmester wrapped up earlier this month and students have transitioned to their next set of two courses per day. Report cards indicating student learning progress for Quadmester 2 will be available at the end of January 2022, which is traditionally the end of Semester 1. Speaking of semesters, the Ministry of Education recently announced that school boards may return to the semester approach, where students take four courses at a time for 20 weeks, rather than the existing quadmester approach, where they take two courses a day for 10 weeks. Before making a decision, we will be asking for your input through an online ThoughtExchange. More about this is coming soon.

**COVID-19 DAILY SCREENING:** Please remember to do COVID-19 screening for your child every morning before going to school. This is a necessary safety step for all students, staff and visitors going into our schools. If symptoms are present, or if someone is awaiting test results after experiencing symptoms, stay at home and do not go to school/work. According to public health guidelines, everyone in a household, unless they are fully vaccinated, must stay home until either receiving a negative COVID-19 test result, are cleared by public health, or are diagnosed with another illness. As well, anyone who is sick, or has any symptoms of illness, including those not listed in the screening tool, should stay home and seek assessment from their health care provider.

**COVID-19 RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS FOR STUDENTS:** The Ministry of Education recently announced that a kit of five rapid antigen tests will be provided to every student to take home before the December break. Use of these tests is voluntary. Watch for more information in the coming weeks.

**COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINICS AT SCHOOLS:** Hastings Prince Edward Public Health will be using space in secondary schools for voluntary COVID-19 vaccination clinics for children ages 5-11. The

clinics will be open from 3:00 - 8:00 PM on specific dates, and will be operated and staffed by public health personnel.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS:** It is the time of year when wintery weather is expected and therefore potential bus cancellations. **When buses are cancelled, schools remain open.** For students unable to get to school on these days, teachers will be asked to help students access learning, either online, by email, or another method. We realize that connectivity may be an issue, so flexibility for that learning will be necessary.

**INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLERS RETURNING TO CANADA:** Please be aware that anyone travelling outside Canada is required to follow [federal guidelines](#) for COVID-19 testing and requirements upon returning to Canada. This may include a period of quarantine for unvaccinated travellers. Please refer to the federal guidelines for up-to-date information.

Lastly, this is [Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week](#) in Ontario. During Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, November 21-27, 2021, Ontario students, staff and parents are encouraged to learn more about bullying and its effect on student learning and well-being. Our staff care about students' health and safety. Useful resources for what to do if your child is bullied, witnesses bullying, or is bullying others, include [kidshelpphone.ca](#) and <https://www.prevnet.ca/bullying/parents>, as well as support personnel in schools.

Thank you for your continued support of HPEDSB schools as we learn and grow together.

Sincerely,



Katherine MacIver  
Director of Education