



Eardley Elementary School

180 North Street ~ Gatineau, Québec ~ J9H 6Y9

☎(819)684-5955 ~ 📠(819) 684-1636 ~ 📧 eardley@wqsb.qc.ca

January 15, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are excited to have students return to school in person on Monday January 17th. As a school, we prefer in-person learning wherever possible and the Ministry of Education is prioritizing this as much as possible. However, we are returning during a very challenging time in the pandemic. The Omicron variant is highly contagious, so we want to ensure that collectively we all adhere to the safety measures and that we all do our part to keep any sickness to a minimum in our community. This also might mean that we face staffing shortages at school, so do expect that there will be adjustments to your child's school day that could look like many different possibilities such as being taught by other teachers or staff or supply teachers, combining groups for some part of the day or for a period of time, working in a different area of the school like the gym or library, and virtual learning.

The following information is the most up to date information we have regarding procedures and protocols from the Government and Public Health. At the time of writing this letter, Public Health still has not finalized all procedures, so more information from Public Health regarding protocols will come next week.

IF A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER HAS SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that staff and students follow these instructions if you have **one** or more of the following Covid-19 symptom(s), **even if they are mild**:

COVID-19 Symptoms

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FEVER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fever = 38.5C (101.3F) and above (0-5 years) ○ Fever = 38.1C(100.6F) and above (6+ years) ○ Or 1.1C above the usual value ➤ RESPIRATORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cough (new or worse) ○ Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath ○ Sore throat ○ Runny nose or nasal congestion (stuffy nose) of unknown cause 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GENERAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sudden loss of smell without nasal congestion with or without loss of taste ○ Generalized muscle pain (not related to physical exertion) ○ headache ○ Major fatigue ○ Significant loss of appetite ➤ GASTRO-INTESTINAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diarrhea ○ Vomiting ○ Stomach aches ○ nausea
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As a general rule, individual COVID-19 cases will no longer be communicated to the school community (as per revised Public Health guidelines.) Considering that testing protocols and availability of tests are changing, Public Health will not be notifying WQSB of confirmed cases. Parents and staff are responsible to inform school administrators of symptoms requiring isolation, or of positive test results (rapid or PCR). We will proceed with the following recommendations provided to us by Public Health.

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School Secretary: Kimberly Teske





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IF A STUDENT HAS ONE OR MORE SYMPTOMS

The student and ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD must isolate for 5 days. The student who had the symptoms must take a rapid test on the 5th day. If this test is NEGATIVE and they have NO SYMPTOMS, they may return to school. If it's a POSITIVE test on the 5th day, there is another period of isolation for 5 additional days.

More detailed information: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/self-isolation>

What to do in the case of a student presenting with symptoms:		
LEVEL	IF DOUBLE VACCINATED	IF NOT DOUBLE VACCINATED
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ isolation for 5 days ➤ negative rapid test at 5 days prior to return to class ➤ if rapid test is positive, additional 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ isolation for 5 days ➤ negative rapid test at 5 days prior to return to class ➤ if rapid test is positive, additional 5 days

If your child develops any symptoms at school, they will go to our “Isolation Room” (with their sibling(s) if applicable) until a parent/guardian comes to pick them up. We will administer a Covid-19 rapid test if the parent wishes (with parental consent only).

Public Health will no longer be reporting any positive cases that we have at the school, so there will not be any correspondence indicating that your child has a case in their class, or in the school as has happened previously. We need to presume that there will be exposures and cases. **This means it is very important that you keep your child home if they show any of these symptoms and come to pick them up if they are sick during the school day in order for us to keep the sickness to a minimum.**

Please be sure to report any Covid-19 related absences or test results to the school to Stephanie Lelievre SLelievre@wqsb.qc.ca. This includes if your child or someone in the household tests positive or has symptoms.

RAPID TESTS

Students will be provided a box of 5 rapid tests once a month for the next several months. You are able to use these as you see fit at home, however public health indicates that it is more accurate to use when you are presenting with symptoms. We will also have rapid tests available to use on students with parents' permission if they are presenting with symptoms throughout the day. Please note that we are still awaiting the delivery of the rapid tests and expect the shipment next

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week; your child will not receive a new box on Monday. As soon as we receive the shipment, they will be handed out to our students and communicated to our community.

STUDENTS WHO ARE ISOLATING AT HOME DUE TO COVID

If your child or children are home isolating, the teachers will provide supplementary work for your child to complete at home by the second day they are home. The work may vary by teacher/grade, and some work will be online (this is one of the reasons why we are having parents/guardians keep the technology we loaned them). There will also be daily contact by email.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Please email Stephanie Lelievre if your child will be absent: SLelievre@wqsb.qc.ca and please be sure to give the specific reason.

- Appointment
- Injury
- Child has Covid-19
- Child has Covid-19 symptoms
- Someone in household has Covid-19
- Someone in household has symptoms

The Ministry will be looking at school absences and reasons for the absence through our absences database; so, we will need the specific reason. As mentioned in the letter from WQSB, we are no longer reporting when there is a case in a class (new Public Health rules), so it is important for everyone to check for any symptoms before coming to school.

If you need to speak to Stephanie about an absence, please call (819) 684-5955.

MASKS

Students from grades 1 – 6 will continue to wear medical masks throughout the day. They are required on the bus, in daycare, in hallways and common areas, and during all classes. Students will remove their mask to eat their snacks and lunch, and they may remove it when they are outside. Students will change their mask at lunchtime, before the end of the day and **anytime during the day if their mask is wet**. Masks will be provided by the school.

Kindergarten students **MUST** wear a medical mask on the bus (they will be provided by the school).

****Some Kindergarten parents/guardians have expressed concern that K students do not wear masks throughout the day. As a school we encourage the use of masks for kindergarten students, but it is the parent/guardian choice. If you would like your Kindergarten student to wear a mask throughout the day, please let the teacher know and they will provide medical masks for your child throughout the day.**



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MATERIALS and TECHNOLOGY

Please return **ALL MATERIALS** that were sent home during package pick-up (completed work, work that was NOT completed at home, workbooks, pencil case, and any other materials that were sent home).

Please do NOT return technology that was sent home (Chromebooks and/or MiFi). These will stay at your home until further notice.

SAFETY PROCEDURES AT SCHOOL

Students will continue to sanitize or wash their hands throughout the day.

Students will not be sharing materials (some minimal sharing will take place in kindergarten).

Students will be instructed to wear their mask properly (covering both the nose and mouth).

Students will change masks at lunch time, before the end of the day, and any other time during the day when their mask is wet.

We will reduce the number of children in the hallways at the same time.

Gym classes will take place outdoors again, whenever possible (considering the weather). Please ensure students are dressed warmly each day.

Students who show symptoms during the day will go to the Isolation Room, and parents/guardians will be called to pick them up. Siblings will also go to the Isolation Room and then go home to isolate as a household. We will administer a Rapid Test – only with parental authorization.

VENTILATION & AIR CIRCULATION

Eardley is mechanically ventilated, and the classrooms exchange the air flow six times per hour. However, the Ministry of Education is recommending that whenever possible to open windows during teaching and recreation time to increase the air flow within the populated classrooms. Therefore, we are asking that you please send your child(ren) with an extra warm sweater to use during the Winter months.

ITEMS FROM HOME

This week students will be returning materials that were sent home (except technology – that stays at home).

The only other items that should be in backpack each day are: lunchbox, water bottle and possibly extra mitts/outerwear.

All other items should remain at home (toys, electronics, phone, fidgets, etc.)

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VACCINATIONS – 2nd DOSE (5 – 11 yr. olds)

The 2nd dose of the vaccination will be offered through the school again for 5 – 11 year olds, with parental consent. Once we receive the date and more details, we will send out the information. The date is expected to be in late January or early February.

FABULOUS TEACHERS AND STAFF

I would like to take the time to commend our fabulous teachers and support staff for the preparation and delivery of online learning. This round of online learning went quite smoothly overall; and many parents/guardians contacted me to express their gratitude for their child's teacher and the support staff. It is not an easy task to teach online at the elementary level, but our team did a wonderful job!

MORE INFORMATION TO COME

Public Health has not yet finalized all of the details for the return to school protocols, but we will send them out to parents/guardians as soon as we receive them.

Our goal is to have a safe, caring learning environment for our students. We are happy for their return, and we count on our school community to follow all of the Public Health rules to ensure one another's safety.

Together, we will get through these challenging times. We are very excited to have students returning next week, seeing their faces, and hearing their laughter always makes the world of difference, especially during difficult times.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at shalpin@wqsb.qc.ca.

Please stay safe,

Samantha Halpin