



Westgate's Reopening Plan for September 2020

Our goal for the school year is to maximize in-class learning while maintaining a focus on safety and reducing the risk of transmission.

Institutional (Operations)

Our school facility has been prepared to accommodate physical distancing. Our maintenance staff has enhanced cleaning protocols and we have easily accessible hand sanitizer units throughout the school. We will greatly enhance the frequency of cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing - particularly on high-touch surfaces and in common/shared areas.

Signage reminds students and staff to be vigilant with hand sanitization and to practice physical distancing. Signage at the entrance of the school reminds all who enter that they cannot enter if they have any symptoms or if they have recently travelled.

Entrances and exits will be managed. Protocols will be in place to safely move students through the school to reduce congestion in hallways and common areas.

Washrooms will be cleaned/disinfected frequently. Water fountains will be turned off. Students will be encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school. Locker use will be limited.

Screening

Symptom and exposure screening will occur at the start of each day. Staff will self-monitor daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Staff who have any symptoms of COVID-19 will stay home, isolate, and be excluded from work. Schools must maintain records of staff absenteeism.

Parents and caregivers need to monitor their child daily for symptoms and exposures before sending them to school. Parents and caregivers are responsible for ensuring their children are not displaying symptoms before sending them to school.

A student or staff member who meets any of the exclusion criteria will not be admitted to the school and will be advised to immediately isolate and consult Health Links.

We will also support children with self-screening upon arrival at school. Signage, with exclusion criteria, is posted at the entrance to the school.

Visitors

Visitors or volunteers are permitted, but visits will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Where possible, online communication, video, and telephone will be used to interact with families, rather than in person.

If someone wishes an in person meeting with a staff member, they are asked to contact the school to make an appointment.

Learning

All of our recovery learning was completed in June. However, as this year unfolds teachers will be mindful that some expected skills may not have been fully acquired by some students and extra instruction opportunities will be implemented.

Students will stay in their cohort groups throughout the entire day and will be in a specific cohort group area as much as possible. Students will be asked to wear masks in common areas and in class when feasible. Classrooms will be configured to support the physical distancing that is required for the cohort groups. Cohorts will distance themselves from other groups to limit exposure.

Our morning break is staggered to avoid hallway congestion. Lunch hour is also staggered so that only one cohort group at a time is in the cafeteria. All lunches will be eaten in cohort classrooms.

All classes will be offered through Google Classroom so that students who are not able to be at school can access remote learning. This will also allow us to move into a pure remote learning model if the need arises.

Assessment

Student assessment and evaluation will proceed. Grade 12 provincial tests are scheduled to proceed as normal. Report cards will be provided to all students, including in situations where remote learning is required.

Staff

Staff have already begun orientation to our new health protocols. We will complete the orientation in our allotted non-teaching days at the beginning of the school year. We have identified staff who have underlying health concerns and have made the necessary arrangements.

Staff, like students, will wear masks in the common areas. In classrooms, staff will wear masks when feasible.

Professional development this year will focus on pandemic response planning, specifically in remote learning, mental health, and well being.

Students and Families

Students are expected to attend in-class learning. Students who are unable to attend school will be supported in remote learning.

We will continue to have comprehensive regular communication with families through email and we will continue to post information on our website. We will alert our families to health and safety measures implemented by the school. Communication at this time is vital since in-class learning may be suspended on short notice in response to changing public health advice.

Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 connected with the school, public health will lead the response and provide guidance.

Special Classes

Special classes like choral, band, and woodshops will be conducted with suitable space and staffing to ensure student and staff safety.

Ventilation

Since there is less likelihood of transmission in well ventilated environments, we will consider many strategies to ventilate our spaces effectively. The recent redevelopment of our school has a newly designed and efficient HVAC system.

School Drills

Fire drills and school safety drills will be considered within the COVID-19 environment, as current procedures are not conducive to physical distancing. Modifications of drills to achieve goals will be considered.

Food

Our cafeteria will be restricted to one cohort group at a time. No food will be consumed in the cafeteria or common areas. All food will be eaten in cohort classrooms. Cafeteria staff will follow health guidelines in the preparation and distribution of meals and snacks.