

August, 2020

Wakefield School: Return to School Protocol



Dear Parents:

Firstly, we hope that you have enjoyed this beautiful summer and some relaxing family time. We wish to send a huge thank you to parents for your support of the school and staff since all of this began in March. It has been very much appreciated by all of us.

We have been busy preparing the building and developing protocols for the students' return to school based on the updates provided to us by the Ministry of Education and the Western Quebec School Board. There is no question that this will be different and this will understandably cause uncertainty and anxiety for some; however, our planning and procedures always reflect the health, safety and security of your child and our staff first and foremost.

Elementary students will be returning to school in person five days a week as mandatory learning, with enhanced health and safety measures in place. This is an operational guide that respects all of the guidelines and mandates put forward by Public Health, the Minister of Education and the WQSB. It will be adjusted as necessary to reflect the latest Ministry and Public Health guidelines.

This document will provide information about the start of the school year, arrival, departure, access to schools, protocols in place during the day and additional considerations for school operations. **Please carefully read through the document and discuss relevant aspects with your child at home before starting school.**

PROGRESSIVE START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR:

In order to best support the school start-up this year, we will welcome our students in a staggered entry over the first few days so that we can train them in the protocols regarding social distancing, hand washing, new routines, etc.

For kindergarten groups, K4, K5 and the K's in the K-1 split, the schedule will be as follows:

- Friday, August 28: virtual meeting with teachers to support their transition to school
- Monday, August 31: one half of each of the Kindergarten classes will attend the full day (you will be contacted with your specific date)
- Tuesday, September 1: the other half of each of the Kindergarten classes will attend the full day
- Wednesday, September 2: all kindergarten students are at school

For the rest of the school population, Grades 1-6, the schedule is as follows:

- Friday, August 28: Cycle 3 students (grades 5&6)
- Monday, August 31: Cycle 2 students (grades 3&4)
- Tuesday, September 1: Cycle 1 students (grades 1&2)
- Wednesday, September 2: all grades are at school

Please note we will be following our school calendar as published- holidays and PD days.

DAILY HEALTH CHECK:

Public Health has not mandated any screening at school, however it is important that you check in with your child each morning to ensure that they are not exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms before sending them to school. Please contact the school if they develop symptoms at home. We will not be taking the temperature of staff or students upon entry as per Public Health policy, but only if any students or staff are not feeling well at school using a non-touch thermometer.

Any students or staff who present with COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be sent home immediately. It is important that you pick up your child as soon as you are contacted for everyone's safety.

It is important that your child's emergency medical forms are completed and returned to the school and updated if necessary.

PROTOCOLS TO FOLLOW IF COVID-19 IS SUSPECTED OR DETECTED:

The health and safety of staff and students takes precedence over all other concerns. This part requires all of us to communicate with one another clearly and immediately, follow Public Health guidelines without exception, and to act quickly and calmly in order to reduce exposure and keep any possible transmission issues under control.

Any staff who are sick (even with a common cold) are NOT to report to work.

Any child who is sick (even with a common cold) is NOT to come to school. **Please report your child's absence from school for medical reasons.**

If a student or staff member shows symptoms during the school day, (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, loss of taste or smell or other symptoms), they will be immediately isolated into a designated isolation room and parents will be called to pick up their child. A staff member equipped with mask, gloves, eye protection and gown will care for the person while waiting for the parent to pick them up. Sibling(s) of the child will also be sent home.

Parents will have to contact Public Health and follow their guidelines: **1-877-644-4545** and report back to the school. The student or staff member must remain in isolation at home until they have been directed by Public Health for next steps.

If there is a positive test for COVID-19 within a school, all parents and staff will be contacted. Anyone who is considered moderate to high risk is removed and tested. Students will be provided with remote pedagogical support. If there are several cases of COVID -19 in the same class or involves several classes, regional Public Health authorities will step in immediately and the school will follow the recommendations made, including possibly closing a classroom or school based on the situation.

Will there be COVID-19 testing in school?

No. Just like any citizen with symptoms of COVID-19, students must stay home and seek health advice. A good reference source is the COVID-19 Self-care Guide (<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-002492>), which will provide instructions on what to do. Information about the steps to follow, including how to determine if you need to take a test, is also available at Québec.ca (<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/>).

Returning to school after being sick

Provided they do not have COVID-19, children and adults with flu-like symptoms may return to their activities if each of the following conditions has been met: they have gone 48 hours without a fever (without taking medication) **AND** 24 hours has passed after a significant reduction of their other symptoms.

ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL:

A staggered arrival is encouraged by Public Health. Active adult supervision of students will be happening during any transition times during the school day, and at arrival and departure times.

DAYCARE: if your child is registered for AM daycare, they can be dropped off at 7:30 am at the front door. They will be in the multi-purpose room until 7:45am and then escorted to the yard by a daycare educator.

BUS: buses will arrive at different times between 7:45am-8:05am. The students will unload one bus at a time and directed to walk along the sidewalk to the gate and out to the yard. Please note the protocols for the bus in the Transportation section below.

All students who are in the school yard between 7:45-8:05am will be staying with their homeroom groups in a designated area and then will enter the school at the bell through their designated door with an adult and greeted by their teacher.

WALKERS: students are encouraged to arrive at the 8:05am bell time. They can come in the front door and proceed to class under the supervision of an adult.

DROP OFFS: we are expecting a lot of parents to be dropping off in the mornings; parking will be a challenge. Where possible, please drop your child off at the 8:05am bell time rather than prior to the start of school. If your child is dropped off before the bell, they must go through the gate and into the yard.

All students who are being dropped off by parents after 8:05am should enter either through the front door or the side door and wait to be escorted up to their class. Parents will no longer be signing these students in at the office; they will be greeted by a staff member, checked in and escorted into the building. There will be tape marking 2m distances at the front and side entrances of the school should there be a line up and we ask that you do not linger at the school when you drop off your child. Please wear a mask. All other exterior doors will be locked. **Please be patient.**

All students and staff must sanitize their hands upon entry to the school- stations will be set up.

TRANSPORTATION:

Public Health recommends that parents transport their child to school. School busses can only accommodate 44 students per run and therefore, availability of transportation is not guaranteed.

Busses will be disinfected after each run. Bus drivers will also be wearing PPE (masks, goggles and gloves). Students will be expected to sanitize their hands upon the entry and exit of the bus. All students will have an assigned seat designated; students are not permitted to change seats at any time. Siblings

will be sitting together. It is strongly recommended for Kindergarten to Grade 4 students to wear a mask on the bus. It is mandatory for grade 5 & 6 students to wear a mask on the bus. If your child is unable to follow the rules on the bus, their transportation may be suspended. You will be able to access your child's Transportation information through the Mozaik Parent Portal by August 25th.

DESIGNATED DOORS:

In order to relieve congestion, each hallway of classes will be using an assigned door throughout the school day to transition from indoors to the playground:

Kindergarten Hallway	Exit at the end of the Kindergarten hallway
Grades 1 & 2 Hallway	Exit at the end of the Grade 1-2 hallway
Grades 3 & 4 Hallway	Exit at the end of the Grade 3-4 hallway
Grades 5 & 6 Hallway	Main playground door

DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

Class Bubbles/ Distancing Measures

The recommendation of bubbles has been broadened by the Ministry and refers to the entire homeroom class. Within the classroom, the students do not need to physically distance, but they do need to keep 1m distance from students in other classes throughout the day. The staff are still recommended to keep 2m distance from the students and from other adults. Staff will be moving to their groups of students, meaning that students will remain with their class bubbles throughout the day in their assigned classroom, except for Physical Education classes when they will use the gym once we are holding classes indoors. The classroom bubbles will stay together throughout the school day, including at recess and lunch.

All students will be trained on physical distancing and the new guidelines/rules to follow as per Public Health directives. Please note that safety and security is the main priority and therefore, if a student is not adhering to the guidelines/rules and putting another person's safety at risk, parents will be contacted and the student may be sent home.

The most effective ways of reducing our risk at school is to focus on three key habits: wearing a mask, keeping a 2m distance, and proper and frequent hand washing.

Staff will be encouraged to engage in teaching and learning activities outside when possible.

Common Areas

For now, our common rooms will remain closed during the school day to limit the spread of germs from one area to another, including the library and multi-purpose room. We will use the gym on days where we cannot hold classes outside. Students are not allowed to use laptops and IPADS, unless a student has special conditions as per their Individual Education Plan and requires the use of a computer at school.

The resource team will put a plan into place to ensure they have access to technology that will be assigned only to them.

Personal Materials/ Sharing

Students will only be able to use their own supplies and no sharing will be allowed. Students should come to school with limited items as per Public Health. A knapsack, a lunch bag and labelled water bottle should be the only items (with the exception the school supplies that arrive within the first days). All communication from the school will be by email or the website.

Please be sure that all school supplies are labelled with your child's name. Agendas will be used to communicate school news and between parents and teachers, but any messages for the office needs to be sent by email or by phone. We will not have homework/reading going back and forth for now to limit the amount of items going between home and school, but your child's teacher could give you other ideas of things to do at home. Please ensure that your child is not bringing any toys, outdoor gear or extras from home. Extra clothes and indoor shoes should be left at school.

Masks

Grade 5 & 6 students: Masks are mandatory for all Cycle 3 students (grades 5 & 6). The masks are mandatory in all common areas (busses, hallways, staircases, bathrooms, the office etc.). The masks are not mandatory within the classroom or on the playground, however your child can choose to wear their mask in these locations.

Staff: Masks are mandatory for all staff in common areas. It is each staff's personal decision if they will wear a mask within the classroom.

Kindergarten- Grade 4 students: Masks are not mandatory but recommended for students in any other grades if the family prefers and provides it. Should you want your child to wear a mask at school, please be sure to train your child on the proper use of masks at home, as adults will not be able to assist them with their masks.

Handwashing

Students who are coming to school should wash their hands before they get to school, and immediately when they get home. Every staff and student will be sanitizing their hands upon the entry and exit of the building during the school day. We will ask students to wash hands or use hand sanitizer at school often. The soaps and hand sanitizers that we are using are appropriate for their age and proper cleaning. Each classroom is equipped with a sink, soap and paper towel dispensers. If they have dry skin from the products, you can send them with lotion that stays at school.

Please ensure your child has practiced proper handwashing at home, that needs to last as long as it takes to sing happy birthday twice. Your support will help to keep staff and students safe.

Lockers/ Cubbies

Students will be assigned a cubby or locker, however it will only be used for their extra clothes and extra school supplies to start the year. They will be assigned lockers with their classmates and separated from other classes. Their backpacks, lunch kits and outdoor clothes will be kept in the classroom, and they will get ready in the classroom rather than in the hallway. As the weather changes, this will be revisited.

Washrooms

Washrooms will be disinfected completely five times a day, as per Public Health guidelines. The school will have a system in place to communicate to ensure no more than three students are using the washroom at one time.

Water Fountains

As part of our health and safety measures, the water fountains will be closed.

Students are asked to bring a pre-filled water bottle from home every day. Please remember to label your child's water bottle. They cannot share their bottles.

Movement in Hallways/ Stairs

If students need to move throughout the school, they will do so as a class and under the supervision of an adult who can monitor them. This movement will be staggered so that groups have minimal interaction with each other. Hallways and stairs will have tape on the floor to indicate directionality. Students will only be allowed to come to the office if they are sick or injured.

Office/ Attendance Procedures

We ask that parents do not come by the office unannounced at any point during the day. If you need something from us, please contact us first and we will let you know how we will proceed. Most exchanges will happen by us meeting you out front of the building wearing a mask. If you need to report your child's absence or any end of day changes, please contact the office by email wakefield@wqsb.qc.ca or phone 819-459-2373. To reduce contact, we will not allow students to use the phone and we will not be using the agendas to communicate changes in routines. Please advise of any end of day changes to the office by 1:30pm by phone or email; otherwise we cannot guarantee the message is received and your child will go to their expected place.

Staggered Schedule

Please note the changes in our daily schedule in order to accommodate additional recesses to reduce numbers of students in the school yard at one time:

JUNIOR SCHEDULE (K4, K5, Grades 1 & 2)	SENIOR SCHEDULE (Grades 3 – 6)
8:05-8:10am – HOMEROOM 8:10-9:00am – 1 st PERIOD 9:00-9:30am – 2 nd PERIOD 9:30-9:50am – AM RECESS 9:50 -10:10am – 2 nd PERIOD 10:10-11:00am – 3 rd PERIOD 11:00-11:50am - 4 th PERIOD 11:50 – 12:15pm – LUNCH- EAT IN CLASS 12:15-12:40pm- LUNCH RECESS OUTSIDE	8:05-8:10am – HOMEROOM 8:10-9:00am – 1 st PERIOD 9:00 – 9:50am – 2 nd PERIOD 9:50 – 10:10am – AM RECESS 10:10-11:00am – 3 rd PERIOD 11:00-11:50am - 4 th PERIOD 11:50 – 12:15pm – LUNCH RECESS OUTSIDE 12:15-12:40pm- LUNCH- EAT IN CLASS 12:40- 1:30pm – 5 th PERIOD

12:40- 1:30pm – 5 th PERIOD 1:30—1:50pm – 6 th PERIOD 1:50 –2:10pm – PM RECESS 2:10 – 2:40pm – 6 th PERIOD 2:40 – 2:50 – STAGGERED DISMISSAL	1:30 –1:50pm – PM RECESS 1:50 – 2:40pm – 6 th PERIOD 2:40 – 2:50 – STAGGERED DISMISSAL
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RECESS / LUNCH:

In order to limit the contact that students have with other groups, we are staggering recesses so that only half of the school is outside at once and students will stay in their respective class groups, even during outside time. There will be designated areas for play for each group with increased supervision. They will be given some equipment for their class to use, and be assigned a play area for their class where they do not have to social distance. Students will be eating in their classrooms at their desks. Please be sure to send your child with adequate food and water for their day. We are a nut-free school.

Hand washing and desk washing will happen before and after they eat throughout the day. Daycare staff will be supervising the classrooms at lunch, and we will continue with our usual routine of the older students going out to play then eating, while the younger students eat first then go outside.

Playground equipment is still off limits for now, as it is too difficult to clean and it is a shared surface. We will be learning new games that allow them to play while respecting distancing. The students will use their designated door to enter and exit the school.

END OF DAY DISMISSAL:

All students will pack up, clean their work space in the classroom and wash their hands at the end of the day. Support staff and teachers will transition the students between their classrooms and their end of day location, and these transitions will be staggered and supervised to minimize contact between students.

DAYCARE: those students in daycare will meet daycare staff in two areas: the library for those upstairs and the multi-purpose room for students on the main floor. Staff will take attendance and then proceed with daycare routines as usual once the school has been cleared of all students.

PICK UPS: Students will assemble in the Multi-Purpose room and be dismissed out the MPR door to parents who are waiting. Parents, please wait outside on the green space to the left of the front door of the school and respect social distancing measures while waiting. Please wear a mask if possible. **Expect to wait** to pick up your child. Do not park in the bus lane out front. We will send your child out to you when they are ready and we can see you. When your child comes out, please do not linger out front.

WALKERS: students will assemble in the Multi-Purpose room and be dismissed by a teacher once they are checked off the list.

BUS: Students will be escorted out to their buses by their teachers. They will sit in their assigned seat for their drive home.

KOOL KIDS DAYCARE:

Daycare will be following all of the same protocols as during the school day. Daycare will be open until 6pm as usual. Because parents will not be allowed to enter the building, swipe cards will not be issued for now. **In order to qualify for the daycare subsidy, your child must be registered with daycare no later than September 30th.**

Daycare will continue with their schedule of outdoor time as much as possible and limit indoor time. They will enforce hand washing and cleaning of areas and materials. Groups will be determined once we have numbers from registrations, but they will be formed combining as few students as possible and trying to keep students within their same class groupings when possible. If they are mixing with other classes, they will keep the 1m physical distance from others. Groups will be assigned the same daycare educator and be in the same location every day. They will be using the multi-purpose room, gym, and library areas.

For picking up your child from daycare, please come to the front door. A daycare staff member will be assigned to watch at the front door for parents and will walkie-talkie to send your child to the front door to you. Parents will not be permitted in the school.

DAYCARE PAYMENTS: invoices will be distributed to your child at daycare in their agendas. Please make payments with daycare staff when you come to pick up your child at daycare. No one will be available in the office in the mornings to accept daycare payments.

SKI CLUB: At this point, we have no information about ski club. We are waiting to hear from Ski Vorlage if they are accommodating our program. We are planning to run it if they can manage our groups. Protocols to follow once we have determined if the program is running.

CLEANING SURFACES:

We will be following the Public Health directives with respect to cleaning. We will be reinforcing the idea of collective responsibility for keeping our space clean through the day, so that our caretakers have adequate time to disinfect all areas thoroughly every day.

The school will be routinely cleaned and disinfected throughout the day, then thoroughly done each night when everyone has left the building.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System:

Research has shown that the particle size of the Covid-19 virus is around 0.1 μm (micrometer). The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) currently recommends using filters that are efficient at capturing 85% of the particles in 1 μm to 3 μm size range.

Wakefield School is a fully mechanically ventilated building, and the filters are being changed to reach the ASHREA recommendations. The mechanical ventilation proceeds to up to 6 complete changes of air

by classroom every hour and throughout the school, mixing with fresh air. Our system is only 6 years old so it is up to date other than changing the filters for smaller particles.

We will maintain good classroom ventilation by keeping windows open when possible for direct fresh air even though our ventilation system is of a high standard.

ACCESS TO THE BUILDING:

Parents/guardians, visitors and volunteers are not allowed in the school building, as per Public Health Directives to limit the amount of contact and exposure within the school.

Meetings will continue to be in virtual format.

Parents are asked not to congregate outside the school – entrances, exits, playgrounds etc. and are asked to maintain physical distancing at all times on school property while picking-up/dropping off their child. We suggest you also wear a mask when at the school.

Assemblies/Field trips/Hot lunch/ Extra- Curricular Activities:

For now as we focus on the safe return to school and implementing new guidelines and routines, we will remain at school in our classes. As we feel more comfortable and so long as the situation at school remains stable, we will look at introducing the other activities listed above.

MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS AND HOME SCHOOLING:

Students who have a compromised system or live with someone with a compromised system are eligible for the medical exemption, supported by a doctor's note. The WQSB is responsible for processing the applications, and the process and forms can be found on the school and board website and was emailed to parents. Should you choose to keep your child home for any length of time, you need to apply for Home Schooling with the school board, as learning this year is mandatory and in person for all students. Please contact the school for more information for either of these.

I know that this is a lot of information- please spend time preparing your child for this new situation and practicing things like cough etiquette, hand washing and mask wearing. We will be following these procedures very closely as per the requirements given to us by Public Health and the Ministry of Education. **For the safety of your child and our staff, we will be very strict about following these protocol and exceptions will not be made.** We are trying to give you as clear a picture as we can so that you know what to expect in sending your child back to school – school is not the same.

We will make the most of this challenging situation and welcome your child back to school with open arms and hearts.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns, and I thank you in advance for your cooperation so that all of us are protected and safe.

Thank you, Julie Fram Greig Principal, Wakefield Elementary School