



# Egremont Community School

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

As announced this week by the provincial government, several COVID-19 restrictions will soon be lifted in schools across Ontario to align with community measures and return us to a more traditional learning environment.

Schools in Bluewater District School Board continue to follow provincial direction when it comes to our COVID-19 health and safety protocols. With this in mind, please note that the following measures will be in place at our school when we return from March Break effective **Monday, March 21, 2022**:

## Masking

We will continue to encourage but can no longer require that students, staff, and visitors wear masks in our school and on buses. While the province has made the decision to lift the mask mandate, we anticipate that many will still choose to wear masks while at school. Masks and eye protection will be provided for students and staff who wish to continue wearing them until the end of the school year. As we move forward, we ask that all students, staff, and families be kind and respectful of one another regardless of one's personal choice around wearing a mask.

\*Please note that under federal requirements, anyone returning from international travel must wear a mask for a period of 14 days when in public spaces, including schools.

## Cohorting/distancing

Student cohorts and physical distancing will no longer be required indoors or outdoors at school, including during lunch, recess, or on buses. Students will no longer be restricted from mixing with other classes or grades, or from fully using shared spaces, such as the library. Limitations on in-person gatherings and assemblies will also be removed, which means that we can once again plan for in-person school events. Despite these changes, we encourage everyone to continue to be mindful, respectful, and accepting of each other's personal space and comfort level when it comes to physical distancing.

## Daily screening attestation

We will continue to request that students, staff, and visitors self-screen each day before coming to school using the [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#). Students will no longer be required to submit a formal attestation of self-screening at school each day to confirm that they have completed their COVID-19 screening.

## Hand hygiene/cleaning protocols

We will continue to practice and promote proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette throughout the school day. Enhanced cleaning protocols in our school and on buses will also continue.

## Ventilation

We will continue to monitor improvements to ventilation in our school.

### Rapid testing

Rapid antigen tests will be available to support symptomatic testing of students and staff. Rapid antigen tests will also be available to those returning from an unplanned absence due to illness.

### Vaccination

We will continue to encourage vaccination for students, staff, and families as the best defense against COVID-19.

### Isolation requirements

As always, anyone who is sick or has any new or worsening symptoms of illness should stay home until their symptoms are improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea).

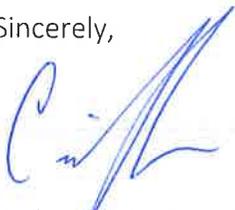
Please note the following updated guidance for close contacts in the community and in households:

- Asymptomatic individuals who are close contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual in the community are no longer required to isolate but must self-monitor for 10 days following their last exposure. During the self-monitoring period, close contacts must wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings and avoid activities where they need to take off their mask (e.g., playing a wind instrument in music class or playing high-contact sports).
- Asymptomatic household contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual are also not required to isolate if they are 17 or younger and fully vaccinated; 18 and older and have already received their COVID-19 booster; or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and have completed their isolation period. Asymptomatic household contacts who are not required to isolate are also required to self-monitor for 10 days following their last exposure, as outlined above. Children under 5 who are asymptomatic household contacts are required to isolate for five days.

We recognize the significance of these changes and know it will be an adjustment for a number of our students and families. Our local medical officer of health supports the provincial government's plan to lift masking requirements for most indoor public settings, including schools, and feels the timing is appropriate based on current COVID-19 data and trends. Rest assured that we remain committed to prioritizing the health and safety of our students and staff.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding as we work through these changes. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the school.

Sincerely,



Cathy Griffin, Principal