**** Friday, September 4, 2020

Dear JK Parents and Guardians:

We look forward to welcoming your child back to school for a safe start to the 2020-2021 school year.

In order to support the successful transition back to school and assist students with learning school health and safety procedures and risk mitigation strategies, Junior Kindergarten students will have a staggered entry.

**Half of the JK’s (Group 1) will start on Tuesday September 15th and return on Thursday September 17th. The other half (Group 2) will attend on Wednesday September 16th and also return on Thursday September 17th.**

We understand that many of the school procedures for the 2020-2021 school year will be new to students; however, we are committed to supporting safe and welcoming transitions to school for our students and families. In addition to supporting student learning, staff will help students become familiar with school and health and safety routines to reduce the opportunities for transmission of COVID-19.

The plan is a multi-layered approach with various safety measures to mitigate opportunities for the transmission of COVID-19. The implementation is a shared responsibility between Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) staff, local Public Health, family households, students and Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services (CLASS). By collectively implementing the plan, our schools will be safe for our students and staff.

Refer to the *School Safety Protocols and the Daily Screening Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians/Students Before Attending School* for more information *(attached)*

Please note: Parents/guardians will have limited opportunities within the school year to switch their child’s school experience between face-to-face instruction and Learn at Home instruction (or vice versa). Families must notify the school in advance and there may be a waiting period prior to their child’s admission to school, depending on scheduling and availability of classroom space.

**School Arrival Procedure**

Students should **not** arrive before 8:15 am and students will proceed to their entrance door directly and enter their classroom. Staff will be standing in the back concourse area to direct students to their entrance. Students will move to their entrance door regardless of transportation, bus, drop-off, before-school programming, or walking. **As students are expected to proceed directly to their classroom, staff supervision will not be available on the playground.** Staff will be available in the school to assist students with finding their homeroom.

At the end of the school day, your child will exit through their same door at 2:50 pm.

**Students in Grades 4-8 must be wearing masks to enter the school, unless otherwise exempted.**

Each student will be designated a location for their materials (coat, backpack, etc.) that will be consistent.

**Parents/Guardians: Please share school arrival information with emergency contacts for the student.**

**Please note: To maintain cohorts and contact tracing, parents/guardians will not be allowed to enter schools at this time, except in case of emergency or a pre-arranged appointment time.** Parents/guardians of students requiring extra support to help get to class once safely at school should contact the school administrator.

If a student leaves school property during the school day (such as for a pre-scheduled appointment), the student will return to school the next day following the completion of the *Daily Screening Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians/Students Before Attending School*.

**Screening**

Parents/guardians are required to assess their children daily and report whether they are experiencing any signs of illness and are expected to keep them home if they are. Parents/guardians should refer to the *Daily Screening Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians/Students Before Attending School* to perform daily screening of their children before arriving at school.

All students who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must not attend school and should seek appropriate medical attention as required, including getting tested at a COVID-19 testing centre. The closest testing centre to our school is 47 Emma St, Chatham, ON.

*Note: Refer to the School Safety Protocols and the Daily Screening Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians/Students Before Attending School* for more information*.*

**Before-and-After School**

The LKDSB and Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services (CLASS) continues to work closely with all child care providers who provide child care options in LKDSB schools to ensure that before- and after-school programs are available to support our students and families.

More information can be found at the following link: <https://cklass.ca/covid19/child-care/>

**Student Transportation**

CLASS is planning service for all eligible students**; there is NO need to register for busing**. Go to <https://cklass.ca/services/student-transportation/address-eligibility/> in order to confirm your eligibility for transportation. Students will be assigned a bus seat, be required to wear masks and will sit with their siblings or classroom cohort. Additional information is available on the CLASS Student Transportation website: <https://cklass.ca/services/student-transportation/>

Download the MySBI app for school bus updates during the school year, including school bus delays and weather cancellations.

**Personal Student Items**

Any personal items (e.g., backpack, clothing, water bottles, food, etc.) should be labeled and kept in an area designated for the student and should not be handled by other students.

**Lunch and Food Services**

Students will be required to bring their own food. Students will eat their lunch with their class in a designated area. Students will not be allowed to share any food.

Students will not be permitted to leave school property during lunch.

Students should bring labelled refillable water bottles instead of accessing drinking fountains. If you do not have a refillable water bottle, please contact the school.

**SchoolCash Online**

In order to support physical distancing and minimize the handling of cash, families are **strongly** encouraged to use SchoolCash Online. Visit the school website to learn more about SchoolCashOnline (click on the orange School Cash Online button).

**Recess and Playgrounds**

Elementary students will have the opportunity to enjoy recess. At this time, Medical Officers of Health have advised that outdoor activity has reduced risk and that playground equipment may be used. Classes will be assigned specific areas of the playground/schoolyard at recess. Students will practice hand hygiene before and after the break.

**Student Learning**

Classes will resume according to a conventional in-person model. When specialist teachers provide instruction to a class (such as French), students will remain in their classrooms, and teachers will move between rooms. Minimizing student movement will reduce congestion and student-to-student interaction between classrooms.

For additional information about programming, read the [*Reopening Our Schools* plan section on Programming: Elementary](https://www.lkdsb.net/Board/Community/PublicHealth/2020-2021SchoolYear/Documents/ReopeningOurSchools2020-Final.pdf).

**Moving Between Learn at Home and Face-to-Face Instruction**

Families wishing to transfer between face-to-face learning to Learn at Home or transfer from Learn at Home to face-to-face instruction must contact their principal according to the following timelines:

* Fall date: Families notify school by Oct. 22. Student begins new program type on November 16.
* Winter date: Families notify school by Jan. 12. Student begins new program type on February 3.
* Spring date: Families notify school by March 30. Student begins new program type on April 20.

Students moving between program delivery choice (i.e. face-to-face learning or Learn at Home) should anticipate changes in teacher(s). If space is available, the LKDSB will attempt to accommodate all requests sooner than the dates above; however, this will vary from school-to-school and grade-by-grade and may not be possible. Transportation delays may also occur. Please note: Parents/guardians will have limited opportunities within the school year to switch their child’s school experience between face-to-face instruction and Learn at Home instruction (or vice versa).

**Special Education Staff Support**

Teachers, Educational Assistants and other special education support staff essential for daily academic programming in the classroom will use personal protective equipment when physical distancing is not possible. Information about Special Education staff support is available in the [*Reopening Our Schools*](https://www.lkdsb.net/Board/Community/PublicHealth/2020-2021SchoolYear/Documents/ReopeningOurSchools2020-Final.pdf) plan. Should you have any specific questions about your child, please follow-up with the school.

**Individual Education Plan**

Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Plan of Care for students will be reviewed and updated in consultation with families and school staff as we begin the 2020-2021 school year. Parents and guardians can expect to receive an updated IEP and/or Plan of Care. If parents and/or guardians have any questions or concerns, please contact our Resource Teacher Tara Brown.

**Mental Health**

As a result of the time away from the school setting, we understand that students may be struggling with mental health concerns, such as anxiety and depression. Families are encouraged to contact their school team to discuss their child’s transition back to the school setting. For additional resources, please access information at: <https://www.lkdsb.net/Board/Community/MentalHealth/>

**Reopening Our Schools Plan**

For additional information about the LKDSB’s Reopening Our Schools Plan, please visit the [LKDSB website](https://www.lkdsb.net/Board/Community/PublicHealth/2020-2021SchoolYear/Documents/ReopeningOurSchools2020-Final.pdf). Please communicate any relevant information with your child’s emergency contacts.

**We look forward to a safe and welcoming start to the 2020-2021 school year. Should you have any specific questions about your child, please contact us at 519-825-4621.**

Sincerely,

Scott Bacik

WAPS Principal

**LKDSB School Safety Protocols**

The LKDSB’s plan for the return to school in September will provide a safe launch to the upcoming school year and reduce the opportunities for transmission of COVID-19. The plans incorporate the most current information from the Ontario Ministry of Education, Public Health, consultation with LKDSB educators and education workers, and our communities.

The plan is a multi-layered approach with various safety measures to mitigate opportunities for the transmission of COVID-19. The implementation is a shared responsibility between LKDSB staff, local Public Health, family households, students and Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services (CLASS). By collectively implementing the plan, our schools will be safe for our students and staff

A vital required element of the Lambton Kent District School Board’s COVID-19 Safety Plan is student self-screening. Parents/guardians should use the Daily Screening Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians/Students Before Attending School checklist to perform daily screening of your child, before your child arrives at school.



**Screening**

Parents/guardians are required to assess their children daily and report whether they are experiencing any signs of illness and are expected to keep them home if they are. Refer to the Daily Student Screening for Possible Symptoms of COVID-19 checklist.

All students who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must not attend school and should seek appropriate medical attention as required, including getting tested at a COVID-19 testing centre. Staff members will be provided with information on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in students so that appropriate action can be taken if students develop symptoms during the day.

Students feeling sick should remain at home while waiting for test results. Public Health authorities will advise on individual return to school conditions and timelines for students.

Signs prompting self-assessment screening will be posted on the exterior doors of our schools.

**Masking**

Students in Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes. Outdoor times like recess can be used as opportunities to provide students with breaks from wearing masks as long as the students are organized to remain within their cohorts.

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be encouraged but not required to wear masks in indoor spaces.

[Click here to watch a video to help students prepare to wear a mask at school](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4ZRdxYdBWw&feature=youtu.be)

**Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of most respiratory viruses including COVID-19. Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly, practice proper respiratory etiquette (such as sneezing into their elbow) and avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth.

Regularly scheduled hand hygiene breaks will be incorporated into the school’s routine. Wall mounted and/or free-standing hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at entrances and exits, and hallways. Additionally, sinks with soap and water are available in many classes. Signage will be placed at all sinks in schools to explain the steps for effective hand washing.

**Physical Distancing**

Students will be taught to maintain physical distancing from others whenever possible. We recognize that it may be difficult for some of our students who are younger or have special education needs. As directed by the Ministry of Education, students will maintain physical distancing of up to one metre, where possible. When physical distancing is not possible, multiple strategies including hand hygiene, masking, cohorting, and cleaning are in place to mitigate risk.

In addition to in-class safety measures, when students are not in their classrooms, efforts will be made to ensure that students maintain appropriate physical distancing.