



March 11, 2020

I am writing today to provide you with an update about the novel coronavirus – COVID-19. Please be assured that student and staff safety are a top priority for the Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB). The LKDSB has been closely monitoring information from local and provincial Medical Officers of Health and the Government of Canada. As with all health-related matters, the LKDSB continues to take direction from the local and provincial Medical Officers of Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

The province is working together in close cooperation with its partners in both the education and health care sectors to ensure the continued safety and well-being of students and staff.

The PHAC has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for Canada. Public health risk is continually reassessed as new information becomes available. As such, PHAC recommends that schools take standard respiratory illness precautions, the same precautions that are recommended every year for cold and influenza season.

The LKDSB recently reviewed its [Pandemic Influenza Protocol/Plan Administrative Procedure](#) and should it become necessary, it is ready to implement. The LKDSB continues to follow its regular practice of exercising high standards of cleanliness in its facilities and regular protocols for frequent and thorough cleaning. Public Health professionals do not recommend students wear masks to school.

Throughout the school year, the LKDSB works closely with public health to monitor health-related issues in schools. For example, all schools are required to report to public health whenever absence due to illness reaches 10 per cent of the school population, which can occur during cold and flu season.

At this time, Public Health has not recommended changes to LKDSB's current protocols and procedures. To reduce exposure to and transmission of a range of illnesses, including coronaviruses, Public Health advises residents to:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer
2. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your arm, not your hand
3. Stay home if you are sick
4. Avoid contact with people who are sick
5. Visit your Health Care Provider or nearest pharmacy to get your flu shot

Please note: The Government of Canada has issued strong recommendations regarding travel as it relates to COVID-19. Before embarking on personal travel, you are encouraged to review the [Government of Canada Travel Advice and Advisories](#). Additional information for travellers returning from affected areas is [available here](#).

The LKDSB will continue to post information from the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and Chatham-Kent and Lambton Public Health regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the [Board](#) and school websites to inform school communities as it becomes available.

For further information and the most up-to-date announcements regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit:

- [Government of Canada Website - 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [Government of Ontario Website – 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [Public health guidance for schools \(K-12\) and childcare programs \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Advice and Advisories](#)
- [Chatham-Kent Public Health](#)
- [Lambton Public Health](#)

We appreciate your cooperation in speaking with your children about these important illness prevention strategies and your support in promoting the overall health and well-being of students and staff.

Should you have any specific questions regarding your child, please contact your school principal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Howitt".

John Howitt
Director of Education