



April 9, 2021

Dear Parents / Guardians:

Thank you for your continued understanding and support through this challenging time. As you may know from recent announcements, the province has implemented a provincewide shutdown for four weeks in response to worsening trends in key health indicators across the province.

The mental health and well-being of children continues to be a key government priority and schools will remain open for in-person learning through the Provincial Emergency and Stay-at-Home Order. The spring break will continue as planned, from April 12 – 16, and schools will reopen for in-person learning on April 19, 2021 in all areas, with the possible exception of Massey and Espanola, where the Medical Officer of Health has special instructions still in place.

In light of the recently announced measures, it is more important than ever that we continue to follow health advice over the upcoming spring break to do our part to keep schools open, for in-person student learning.

At this critical point in the pandemic, the following public health measures are crucial to help prevent and limit the spread of COVID-19:

- Socialize only with your own household.
- Stay home and get tested if you feel ill.
- Participate in the targeted testing offered by your school board.
- Screen every day, including during spring break, for COVID-19 symptoms before attending child care. The COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool is available to assist families with symptom screening.
- Practice good hand hygiene habits, masking, and physical distancing.
- Refer to [Ontario.ca/covidresponse](https://ontario.ca/covidresponse) to learn what public health measures are in place in our community.
- Refrain from travelling, particularly out of the region.

During the spring break, students in Grades 1 – 8 can continue to engage in their own learning through supplemental, curriculum-linked activities available at TVO Learn and TFO IDÉLLO, apprendre à la maison. These rich, engaging opportunities allow students to keep up with their learning and interests. Secondary students can continue to access TVO's Independent Learning Centre (ILC) Open House and Portes ouvertes pour les

cours TVO ILC in French-language. Mathify (English) and Eureka! (French) are also available to provide one-on-one online tutoring services for elementary and secondary students. Mathify covers online math tutoring in English for Grades 6 – 10 and Eureka! supports all subjects for French-language students in Grades 1 – 12.

For the week of April 12 – 18, pharmacies that currently offer testing and assessment centres across the province will accept appointments from students and education staff for asymptomatic testing. This testing is currently available in Elliot Lake at Shoppers Drug Mart and No Frills. Asymptomatic testing is also available in Sault Ste. Marie at both Shoppers Drug Mart locations and (Rome's) Independent Grocer.

After spring break, the Ministry of Education will be working with school boards to offer school-based clinics. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of this testing capacity to have their children tested to support a safe return to school on April 19. Children attending child care, and child care staff, will also be eligible to access this testing.

As a reminder, before coming back to school on April 19, you must screen for COVID-19 symptoms. If your child or anyone in your household is ill, stay home and follow the guidance in the school screener at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>.

In addition, on April 19, all HSCDSB students and employees will be asked to provide confirmation of the results of their screening to their schools. This process is already in place for staff and secondary students. However, for April 19 only, elementary students will need to provide confirmation that they completed and passed the online school screening. Accompanying this letter is a form, which must be returned with your child(ren) when they return to school on Monday, April 19. Should your child(ren) not bring confirmation of a completed and passed online school screening upon their return, you will be contacted.

We wish all of you and your children a safe and restful spring break. As always, we urge you to adhere to the public health measures outlined earlier in this letter, particularly those related to travel and social gatherings. Your ongoing diligence, commitment to the common good, and prayers for everyone's protection are greatly appreciated.

Nurturing hope,



Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

