

NOTICE TO FAMILIES OF KPDSB STUDENTS

Province Wide Shutdown Announced

December 21, 2020

Today as [announced by Premier Ford](#), Ontario will enter a province wide shutdown to help stop the spread of COVID-19. This shutdown includes a period of enhanced public health restrictions beginning at **12:01 a.m. December 26, 2020**. As per the Premier's announcement, the shutdown will last for two weeks in our area.

While transmission rates in schools remain low, all elementary and secondary schools will move to teacher-led remote learning when students return from Christmas break on **January 4, 2021**. This action is being taken in support of the Government's broader efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19. Schools located in the Northwestern Health Unit region can resume in-person instruction on **January 11, 2021**, for both elementary and secondary students.

Remote Learning

Remote learning will be provided for all students, beginning on January 4, in alignment with [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) No.164: Requirements for Remote Learning](#). This PPM provides the standards for instruction of synchronous learning so that parents and students know what to expect and so that there is a consistent approach to ensure students are fully engaged in their learning. For students in Grades 1 – 8, 75% of the instructional day must be synchronous learning, while in Grades 9 - 12, 80% of the course is delivered synchronously. Synchronous learning is part of the 300-minute instructional day during which teachers remain available to students.

**Synchronous learning is a term used to describe learning that occurs at the same time, but not in the same place. Synchronous learning means online learning where students learn from and with teachers, other staff and peers in real time, but not in person.*

Mental Health Support and Resources

Christmas and holiday celebrations are going to look and feel different this year in light of the current public health measures in place to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Mental health resources are available through our website by [clicking here](#). In the event families need support in accessing mental health services for students who are experiencing or could be expected to experience mental health challenges during this time please email us at mentalhealthsupports@kpdsb.ca. Should you or your child be in crisis and need immediate support, please [click here](#) for outreach numbers.

In addition, students and families can access further mental health resources, including Kids Help Phone, which offers 24/7 counselling and referral services across the province. To use this free resource, youth can call 1-800-668-6868, or text CONNECT to 686868. School Mental Health Ontario also has a number of great resources for students, parents and families on their website at www.smho-smso.ca.

WWW.KPDSB.ON.CA

Please contact Sheena Pilipishen by email at sheena.pilipishen@kpdsb.ca, if you have any questions about this notice.

Learning Resources

The Ministry of Education recently announced the launch of two new portals, [TVO Learn](#) and [TFO IDÉLLO, apprendre à la maison](#), which provide supports for students learning remotely by accessing additional educational resources developed by Ontario certified teachers.

In addition, 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](#), which provide access to 144 Grade 9 to 12 courses. These ILC resources are designed to provide flexible learning opportunities to help students keep up with their learning or deepen their understanding of a specific subject.

Student Transportation

Because both the elementary and the secondary panels will be learning remotely the first week in January, no student transportation services will be provided January 4 - 8, 2021. Once schools resume in-class instruction on January 11, 2021, student transportation services will resume.

What to Expect When We Return to School in the New Year

As we prepare to return to school in the New Year on **January 11, 2021**, it will be extremely important that we continue to follow the health and safety protocols that have been put in place in our schools to keep students and staff healthy and safe. We will continue to reinforce the use of masks and hand hygiene as well as cohorting and physical distancing with students and our staff.

A few important reminders to help keep our schools safe when we return:

- All students, staff, and essential visitors must **conduct a daily screening for symptoms of COVID-19 every day before** attending school using the [COVID-19 school screening tool](#).
- Any students or staff who **do not feel well should not attend school**.
- Any students or staff who have been **tested for COVID-19 must stay home to self-isolate until the test results are received**; test results will indicate the next steps.

Our schools continue to be safe places for students to learn. This has been accomplished through the actions of our students, families and employees in implementing and following our comprehensive safety plans that include mandatory masking for students in Grades 4 – 12, enhanced cleaning protocols, and personal protective equipment, improved air quality, physical distancing, and cohorting.

As our schools prepare to pivot to remote learning on January 4, your child(ren)'s school will have additional instructions and communications, particularly around access to learning materials. Families are asked to continue to monitor your emails for important information and updates.

Sincerely,



Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education