

SCDSB 2021-2022 RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

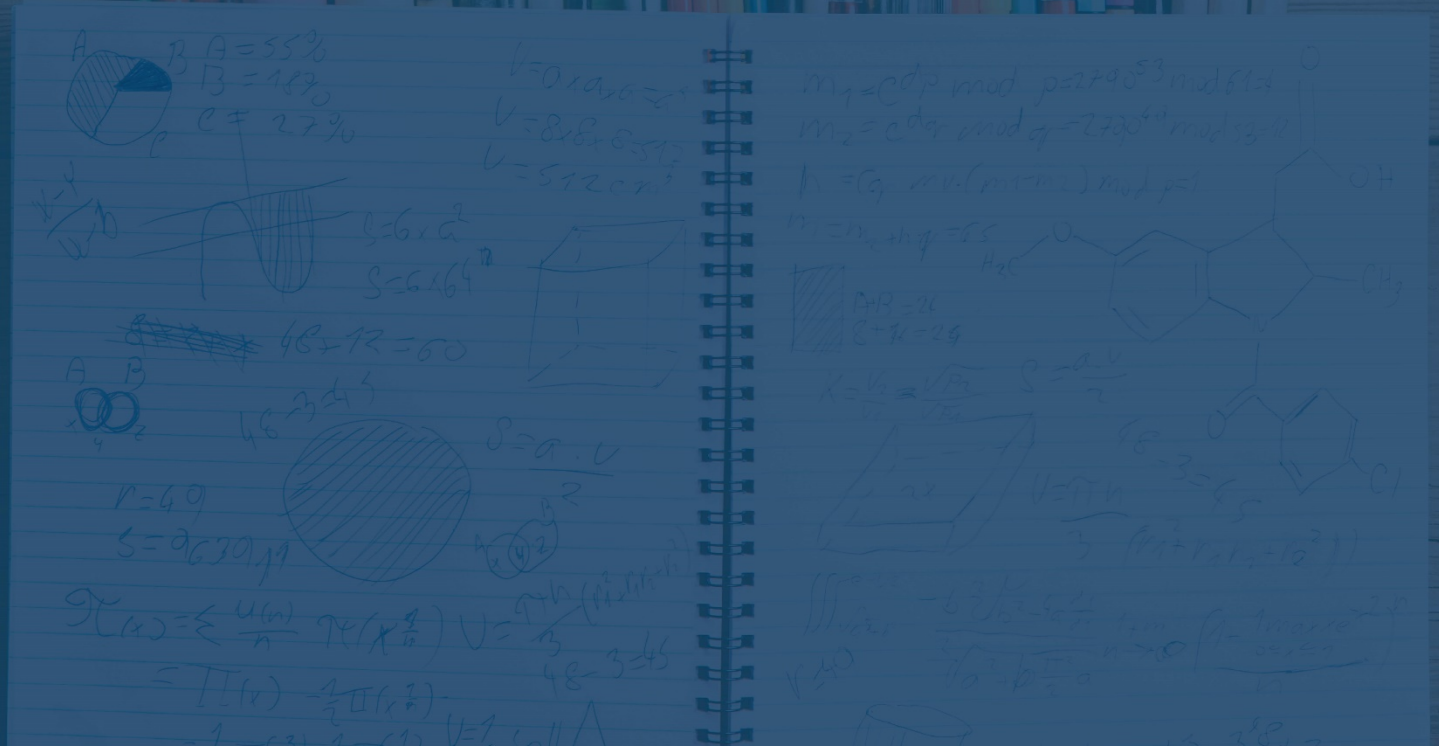


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Introduction

On August 13, the Ministry of Education provided school boards in Ontario with an updated guidance document outlining the requirements for reopening schools in September. The [COVID-19: Health, safety and operational guidance for schools \(2021-2022\)](#) is available on the Ministry of Education website.

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) continues to work closely with, and take advice from, the health authorities at the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) on all matters related to COVID-19. This document has been developed in consultation with the SMDHU and outlines the return to school plans and protocols that will be implemented by the SCDSB for the 2021-2022 school year.

Elementary schools

In-person learning

All SCDSB elementary schools will reopen under a conventional school day model, with enhanced public health protocols and cohorting considerations in place, on Sept. 7, 2021. The plans for reopening have been developed in consultation with the Ministry of Education and the SMDHU.

- Students will attend full time, in classroom cohorts that will not mix or combine with other classes.
- Recesses and classes will be timetabled to limit interactions between classes.
- Students will eat in their classrooms.
- Common areas such as libraries and gymnasiums will be open.
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged.
- Staff will be required to wear masks.
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 are required to wear masks. Families are encouraged to provide cloth masks that securely cover the nose and mouth for their children. The SCDSB will provide cloth masks to students who do not have them.
- All students and staff are required to complete a self-screen prior to attending school each day using the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#).
- Students or staff with symptoms must stay home.

Learn@Home

Elementary school families were asked to make an important decision about their child(ren)'s learning mode for September 2021. On Monday, May 17, elementary school families [received a survey via email](#) regarding enrolling their child(ren) in the Learn@Home program.

The Elementary Learning Mode survey is closed. New requests or changes to learning mode for September 2021 are not being accepted. Families who did not submit a request for Learn@Home and any new registrations will begin the 2021-2022 school year as an in-person learner. Requests for asynchronous learning with your child's in-school teacher should be made through the school when offices reopen the week of August 30, 2021.

- Students may be combined in classes from multiple schools.
- Students will remain attached to their home school for academic supports.
- Student attendance will be taken daily.
- Students may move between remote learning and in-person learning at the natural term transition time at the end of Term 1 in February 2022, where space exists.
- Students will be provided with a daily schedule of subjects/courses according to a five-hour instructional day.

- Student learning will be based on overall expectations across all subjects/courses and grades, and will include opportunities for guided instruction, large and small-group learning, synchronous check-ins and asynchronous independent work.
- Students in Grades 1-8 are expected to participate in 225 minutes of synchronous learning daily.
- Students in Kindergarten are expected to participate in 180 minutes of synchronous learning daily.
- Synchronous learning time may include students working independently and in small groups while engaged in a virtual classroom with the teacher overseeing their learning and available for questions.
- Students will be able to meet with educators, as required, to address specific learning needs.
- Students who do not have access to a learning device will be provided with access to technology. Distribution of technology will be facilitated by the school at the beginning of the school year.
- Students will access Google Classroom as their synchronous learning platform.

Secondary schools

All SCDSB secondary schools will reopen under a conventional school day protocol, with enhanced public health protocols and cohorting considerations in place. Plans for reopening have been developed in consultation with the Ministry of Education and SMDHU.

Secondary school schedule

The semester one timetable will be based on a modified semester. This means students will take two classes per week, alternating between week A and week B for the full semester. This schedule limits the number of students in a cohort, and it reduces the number of students that come into contact with one another each week.

Sample schedule:

Week A	Week B	Time
Period 1	Period 3	8 to 10:30 a.m. 150 minutes
Lunch	Lunch	10:45 to 11:45 a.m. 60 minutes
Period 2	Period 4	12 to 2:30 p.m. 150 minutes

**times may vary between schools*

In-person learning

- Students will attend full time in a modified semester.
- Students may leave school property during their lunch period or eat in the cafeteria.

- Common areas such as libraries and gymnasiums will be open.
- Lockers will be available for student use.
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged.
- Students and staff will be required to wear masks. Families are encouraged to provide cloth masks that securely cover the nose and mouth for their children. The SCDSB will provide cloth masks to students who do not have them.
- All students and staff are required to complete a self-screen prior to attending school each day using the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#).
- Students or staff with symptoms must stay home.
- Staff will be available to address timetable questions beginning on August 30.

Remote learning

In June, secondary school families were asked to make an important decision about their child(ren)'s learning mode for September 2021. Timetables have been created to support students who are participating in remote learning. Students who selected remote learning will remain in remote learning until Semester 2. Students may move between remote learning and in-person learning at the start of Semester 2. New requests or changes to learning modes will not be accepted until Semester 2.

Elementary and Secondary Schools

Health and safety

We want to assure you that the health and well-being of our students and staff remains our top priority. We are in regular contact with our local health authority, the SMDHU, and continue to take their direction on all matters related to COVID-19.

Students and staff will be required to complete the daily COVID-19 self-assessment prior to entering SCDSB schools and buildings. Students and staff who experience symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to remain at home and follow the direction of the SMDHU. Students who are required to remain home due to symptoms of COVID-19 will have access to learning materials provided by their teacher on the learning platform assigned, either Google Classroom or D2L.

Masking

- Students from Kindergarten through Grade 12 and staff will be required to wear masks while indoors. Families are encouraged to provide cloth masks that securely cover the nose and mouth for their children. The SCDSB will provide cloth masks to students who do not have them.

Enhanced health and safety protocols

- Hand sanitizer will be provided in each classroom for student and teacher use.
- Students will receive training on proper hand hygiene, including instructions on [hand washing and sanitizing](#).

Ventilation

The Ministry of Education ventilation strategy is one element of multiple protective strategies being employed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and to support healthier and safer learning environments.

The SCDSB has fully functioning mechanical ventilation systems at all schools. These systems meet all industry standards, including the use of MERV 13 filters (the highest rated system filters available). The Optimizing Air Quality in Schools funding allocation, provided by the Ministry of Education last fall, allowed the SCDSB to make enhancements to ventilation and filtration systems over the past year.

- Standalone high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter units will be placed in all learning spaces without mechanical ventilation.
- HEPA filter units will be placed in all Kindergarten classrooms.

Further details about the SCDSB ventilation profile will be posted on the SCDSB website by September 3, as per the Ministry of Education requirements.

Enhanced cleaning

Enhanced cleaning protocols will be implemented, including:

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting at least twice a day of frequently touched surfaces and shared resources such as doorknobs, light switches, toilets and faucet handles.
- Buses will be sanitized twice daily, with frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces.

Physical distancing

- Directional arrows and signage will be utilized in schools to support physical distancing measures.
- Schools will have designated entry and exit doors and staggered entry and exit times.
- Acrylic shielding will remain installed in school offices.

Mental health and well-being

Staying connected to mental health supports, whether in school or participating in remote learning, is important for students experiencing mental health concerns. Human connection and ongoing conversation are essential to supporting and enhancing student well-being, coping, a sense of belonging and readiness to learn.

Supports for student mental health and well-being, including mental health and wellness promotion and prevention and intervention strategies, will continue to be provided by SCDSB staff. Available options include brief intervention services, wellness check-ins and referrals to community mental health services.

- SCDSB social workers will continue to provide direct support to students with emerging or identified mental health concerns, along with resource and consultation support for staff and families.

- SCDSB child and youth workers will continue to promote and to provide social emotional skill building support to students.
- Families can continue to access resources and supports on the SCDSB website and contact the SCDSB school mental health team for consultation and discussion.

Transportation

Home to school transportation for SCDSB students is provided by the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC). The SCSTC is working in partnership with the SCDSB and bus operators to develop and implement physical distancing and enhanced cleaning protocols, based on Ministry of Education guidelines, for students who will be riding in school buses and other vehicles.

- SCSTC-contracted school vehicle operators will follow enhanced cleaning protocols for frequently touched surfaces. This includes increased disinfecting protocols for frequently touched surfaces (e.g. handrails, seatbacks) twice daily.
- The SCSTC will create seating plans to support maximum physical distancing, and to keep students from the same family and the same cohort together, where possible. Students will be required to remain in their assigned seats while on the bus.
- Prior to going to the bus stop in the morning, families must ensure that students complete the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) and stay home if they are displaying symptoms or if they feel ill.
- Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to respect physical distancing of at least two metres between students at assigned bus stop locations.
- Students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 are required to wear masks while taking school transportation.
- Students are encouraged to follow proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- For students approved for specialized transportation, parents/guardians of students riding on school purpose minivans will be required to wear a face covering if their child requires assistance boarding or exiting the vehicle or buckling their seat belt.

Program-related information

Special education

Regardless of the instructional model that families determine is appropriate for their child (in-school or remote learning), special education supports and services will continue to be provided based on students' Individual Education Plans (IEP). For families that choose remote learning, the student's IEP may be adjusted to accommodate specific items related to the learning environment at home.

In-person learning

- Special education supports will continue to be provided at the same level (e.g. direct instruction, instruction and environmental accommodations, access to

specific staff such as special education resource teacher or educational assistants, educational assessments, etc.).

- Students who access an elementary learning centre will continue to participate in that program as per their IEP.
- Students who access a sensory room based on their IEP will still be able to do so.

Remote learning

- For families that choose remote learning, students will be provided with special education supports through a combination of their 'classroom' teacher as well as special education staff (e.g. special education resource teachers, educational assistants, speech and language therapists, etc.).
- Support will be provided virtually both synchronously (real-time) and asynchronously, depending on the needs identified collaboratively between the family and the school, and as reflected in the student's IEP.

Cooperative Education

In-person community cooperative education placements may be offered, provided they align with the direction and recommendations from the SMDHU. If in-person placements are not possible, students will be offered virtual placements.

Kindergarten

The SCDSB is excited to welcome Kindergarten students this fall. School staff will connect with families prior to the start of the school year to complete the Kindergarten registration process and provide further information about the school year.

Kindergarten students will begin school through a staggered and graduated entry to provide students with time to learn new classroom procedures and routines in smaller groups, as well as for educators and families to discuss specific learning needs of students before arrival. Year 2 (Senior) Kindergarten students will begin school on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, and will attend continuously from this time. Year 1 (Junior) Kindergarten students will begin school on Thursday, September 9, 2021, and will attend continuously from this time.

Athletics

Extracurricular activities will begin again this fall. More information will be forthcoming.

Field trips

Field trips will be explored as we move into the 2021-2022 school year. Information will be communicated to students and parents/guardians on a school-by-school basis.