

Hello Harbord parents/guardians and students:

I hope everyone is keeping well. Being October --- having the beautiful colours of autumn upon us, and having just experienced our first National Truth and Reconciliation Day, **ORANGE (Harbord orange!)** is definitely my new favourite colour! I encourage everyone to continue to get outside, enjoy the fresh air, stay connected with the beauty that surrounds us, and continue to LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER. For most of us, we are well into our return to learning and are hopefully well adjusted to our new modified semester schedule and pace. Here are a few updates and reminders:

COVID-19 Decision Guide

With the noticeable change in temperature, many of us will no doubt start to develop some symptoms that are associated with the common cold. Please continue to follow our health protocols and complete our health assessment daily before entering the school. Any student with the COVID-related symptoms needs to stay at home and get tested (we have testing kits at school!). Again, here is the **Decision Guide** to determine what steps to take following the health self-assessment. **Please review this information as the chart is very helpful and clear.** Please continue to communicate with the school if your child is absent and provide the appropriate information.

COVID-19 Take-home Testing Kits

Our partnership with Women's College Hospital (WCH) Pandemic Programs and the distribution of saliva testing kits for symptomatic students and staff has been very successful thus far. The turnaround time to get results has been minimal and this program has helped to keep us all safe, healthy, and operational. Let's continue to use this fantastic resource! Remember, **on-site testing saliva kits can be accessed through the main office. A saliva testing kit will be given to students/staff who show symptoms to complete at school or to take home and return to school.** We will then send the sample to WCH and test results will be sent quickly and confidentially. Again, "How-to" instructions are found inside the take home kit. WCH asks student/parents to fill out the registration forms properly. It is important to fill out all the information on the registration form including the name of the school, student/staff information and consent/ no consent to notify the principal.

Virtual Learning for student absences

As shared previously, the deadline for Semester 1 Virtual Learning has passed, and the next time to switch to Virtual Learning is for Semester 2. Information and deadline dates for switching to Virtual Learning will be provided by the TDSB towards the end of Semester 1.

Some parents and students have inquired about accessing the virtual learning for short-term absences and absences that do not lead to a positive COVID-19 test result. First and foremost, WE CARE tremendously about the health of your child, their wellbeing, and their academic learning needs. If a student is absent, please notify the school and the teacher - and any missed work will be provided. If there are accommodations that need to be made, the teacher will certainly do so. The instruction and missed work will be provided through a variety of possible platforms including Google Classroom and/or Brightspace posted information, email, recorded video instruction, audio-recorded information, etc. We do not want your child to 'fall behind' and will do our best to support them during their explained absence. Arrangements will be made for any missed assessments or evaluations. If your child is ill and needs to remain at home, we want your child to take care of themselves and get well. Health and wellbeing are so important especially during these pandemic times. We would like our Harbord students to learn to prioritize their health and self-care along with

the importance of academic achievement --- BOTH are EQUALLY important for our Harbord family. This is an important mindset as our children begin to enter post-secondary learning and the workforce. Again, **only students who have been formally enrolled in the virtual learning option and students who must isolate for COVID-related reasons are permitted to be on the Zoom or Google Meet video call. Once families provide information to the administration confirming COVID positivity or quarantining requirements (ie. close contact to sibling with COVID concerns at another school), students will then be notified of the temporary virtual learning video call links or codes.** Thank you to everyone involved in supporting our Harbord Tigers to be the 'best they can be!' (both academically and healthwise).

Upcoming School Council

Reminder: our first School Council meeting this year will be this Monday, October 4, 2021. Our meetings are open to all parents and caregivers with children attending Harbord. Please see the attached invitation letter from our past school council chair, James Murphy. He has also included information about our elections for this school year. The meeting is from 5:30pm – 7pm so come out and join us remotely from the comforts of your home. The School Council Zoom meeting link is: <https://tdsb-ca.zoom.us/j/99123313428>

Music Band class (wind instrument) update

We are pleased to let you know that a plan has now been developed to support the safe and gradual re-entry of wind instruments in elementary and secondary schools at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The re-entry plan for wind instruments has been approved by Toronto Public Health (TPH) and as with all other activities, our first priority is ensuring the appropriate health and safety measures are in place. Together with TPH we will continue to monitor the situation and make any adjustments as necessary to ensure that the reintroduction of these activities does not lead to further spread of COVID-19. At this time, wind instruments are permitted for playing within a cohort indoors with distancing requirements. Wind instruments are permitted outdoors in mixed cohorts with physical distancing, and outdoor playing is recommended wherever possible. Specific considerations and guidelines have been established for both elementary and secondary, which school staff will be reviewing in the coming days to establish a plan for our school. We thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we work to get things up and running. We look forward to providing students with the opportunity to begin playing wind instruments again!

Extra Curricular Activities

As it was recently announced that TDSB may move forward with extracurricular activities, Harbord staff are working together to facilitate the gradual reintroduction of extracurricular activities including clubs, councils, and school sports. Staff are looking through the Secondary Guidelines to ensure that health and safety protocols will be followed. We are looking forward to providing extracurricular opportunities in the safest way possible and ask for your patience and understanding. As you can appreciate, Interschool sports do require massive organization and coordination from individual school/team declarations to league schedules (permits) and referee assignments. It's a 'dimmer-switch, not simply a light switch'...Hang tight...more information to come!

Follow our Twitter account!

This week we had different activities occur during our National Truth and Reconciliation Week leading up to our first National Truth and Reconciliation Day yesterday! Thank you to our Harbord Indigenous Education Committee for organizing and to our wonderful students who helped make it happen. It was an amazing day where we learned and reflected. I have various photos posted on our Twitter account so have a look and follow us at [@harbordci](#). This is where you can get up-to-

date information, join us in celebrating good news items, and share in the overall FUNomenal learning that happens at Harbord!

As always, please continue to practice the health and safety protocols and follow the most up-to-date Toronto Public Health directives.

Remember Harbord:

1. Wear your mask.
2. Maintain physical distance.
3. Practice good hand hygiene (wash your hands or use hand sanitizer).
4. Stay home if you are ill.

“Harbord, we CARE for each other. TOGETHER. We are ONE!”

Steve