

YORK MEMORIAL COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

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September 22nd, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Let me start by thanking you for your patience and understanding as we worked towards putting new measures in place in order to welcome back students. We have certainly been operating in uncharted waters so to speak and have had many challenges to overcome. The good news is that we are getting there! Face to face in class schooling is back in session and we are nearly complete in adjusting student timetables where possible for quadmester one.

You received a letter from me last week in regard to a student who had tested Covid-19 positive and had entered into the school. I want you to rest assure that the school had and continues to put in place the ever changing health and safety recommendations that are required by the TDSB and Toronto Public Health (TPH). Such safety protocols include:

- Screening students and staff daily prior to their entry coming into the building. Please note that the screening questions are devised by Toronto Public Health and not the school.
- Expectation that all staff and students wear a mask (monitoring and enforcing this)
- Asking student and staff to hand sanitize as soon as they enter the building
- Directional arrows and signage placed around the school
- Hand sanitizer at the entrance of each classroom.
- Cohorting for the purpose of keeping students together in a small group throughout the school day which limits direct and indirect contacts
- The daily cleaning of classrooms including the desks and chairs that students sit on
- Staggered breaks and dismissals
- Posting of signage to remind all of physical distancing and symptoms of Covid-19
- Virtual assemblies with students to inform them about the expectations in regard to returning to school safely
- All teachers were asked to share a Covid-19 Prevention Awareness power point with students during the first two classes
- Connecting with the TTC to request increased bus service to help reduce overcrowding on the busses.
- Updated information of the school website including a Covid-19 resource link

The above lists of things are some of the measures and protection strategies to keep our students and staff safe.

These protective measures whilst being exhaustive are not enough however. In order for our school to be as safe as it can be we need you help as parents.

What Can Parents/Guardians Do To Help?

One of the most important things that you can do as a parent or guardian is to check your child each morning for any symptoms outlined on the Self-Assessment chart. Please see attached.

Remember, if the response is yes to any of these questions please keep your child at home and call Telehealth or your health care provider to find out if you need the test.

In addition to the questions outlined on the Self-Assessment chart, if you or someone that you have been in close contact with has gone for Covid-19 testing and are awaiting your results, please self-isolate and do not come to school. Instead, please wait until you have received your results and if negative continue to wait until the symptoms (if any) that you have been experiencing has gone away. You should be 24 hours symptom free.

In addition, please speak to your child in regards to maintaining social distancing when they leave the school premises and when they are entering and exiting the TTC.

Also, if your child has access to a cell phone that they bring to school please have them download the NOW mobile self-assessment screening app in order to assist with screening students quicker at the door.

How do I access the app?

The app is available two ways:

1. By visiting <https://tdsb.service-now.com/tswp> (web based)
2. Downloading the application on to your phone or tablet:
 - Visit the [Google Play Store](#) (Android devices) or [Apple App Store](#) (iPhones or iPads)
 - Download the Now Mobile app
 - Locate the Now Mobile app on your device and click the icon to launch it
 - Type tdsb in the top field and click Save and Login
 - To use the app, you need access to the internet and TDSB student or staff login credentials.

School Council Operations - COVID-19 Reopening

The following information regarding School Councils was sent to all Principals, Vice Principals and Trustees from TDSB Interim Associate Director Karen Falconer.

“Parent/Caregiver engagement and partnership remain a high priority for TDSB schools.

As the TDSB implements the return to school plan, staff is focusing collective efforts on the continuation of learning and the well-being of students and staff while doing our best to stay connected to family/caregivers and School Councils.

We recognize it is not business as usual for anyone and some families may face barriers to their participation in School Council meetings and other activities. We must try to balance these different realities in our approach as School Councils engage in activities this school year.

TDSB staff and the Parent and Community Engagement Office (PCEO) acknowledge the work of the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) in supporting School Councils and schools in developing a common understanding and direction of School Council continuation and operations.

With these important considerations in mind, the following protocols are effective immediately for School Councils:

Meetings

- School Council executive and working group meetings may be held;*
- School Council meetings may be held or postponed until October, 2020;*
- The existing school council membership remains in office until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections (under Education Act, O. Reg. 612/00: School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees);*
- School Council meetings should be held virtually given the new protocols on numbers allowed to meet in person. Further guidelines will follow.*

Elections

- With 14 days’ notice, elections of parent members of School Council will be held within 30 days after school re-opening, which will be by the week off October 19, 2020 where feasible;*
- Virtual school parents/caregivers are eligible to be members of their home school council. They are eligible to hold executive positions (e.g. voting membership, chair, etc.);*
- All other election/appointment of School Council non-parent/caregiver members may be held in the same timeline;*
- Notifications for Council elections and nominations process may now being;*
- Schools are required to ensure that all families are informed of the School Council elections. Notice may be provided via School Messenger (phone/e-mail, virtual school*

newsletters, posting on website, flyers posted on school door or fence etc). All efforts possible to notify parent/caregivers must be made though the challenges of the current Covid context may preclude paper distributions to students;

- *Election notification must include a nomination form (Virtual School) or email/call-in nomination process with set date/time for the opening and closing of nominations, date/time of the elections and process for casting ballots”.*

In consultation with the current Co-Chairs, given that there are several new protocols that we need to work through, School Council elections will be postponed until mid-October. 14 days' notice will be given once the new date for School Council elections is confirmed.

Nutrition Program

We are pleased to announce that we will be starting the Nutrition Program back up starting Monday, September 28th. More information about the program will be emailed out to parents later on this week.

Well, I apologise this has been a very lengthy letter! If you have any questions in regard to anything that you have read in this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school at 416 394-3000 or email us at yorkmemorial@tdsb.on.ca.

Wishing all YMCI students (hybrid & virtual) a successful quadmester one. Continue to take care of yourself and each other.

Sincerely,

Donna Drummond
Principal