

August 26, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are looking forward to welcoming students and staff back to school in September. We know how important in-person education is on the overall health, well-being, and development of our children. This letter outlines important actions you can take to protect your children and family on return to school.

On August 13, 2021, the Province released the [COVID-19: Health, safety, and operational guidance for schools \(2021-2022\)](#), which provides a detailed description of the health and safety measures that school boards and schools will need to follow to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, and staff for the 2021-2022 school year.

Given that COVID-19 and the Delta variant are prevalent in our region, Peel Public Health has recommended [additional public health measures](#) to enhance the provincial recommendations. As parents and guardians, four of the actions you can take to support school safety this year are:

**1) Masks**

Students in Grades 1 to 12 are required to wear masks inside the school, including in hallways and during classes, and on the bus. Masks are also required outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained between different cohorts. Peel Public Health strongly recommends that school boards and private schools also require students in kindergarten (JK and SK) to wear masks while attending school in-person and while on a school bus. Please refer to your school's and/or school board's student masking policy for more details regarding JK and SK masking requirements.

**2) Daily On-site Screening Verification**

Complete the [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#) tool each day with your child to ensure that they pass the screening. Please ensure that you keep your child at home and follow the appropriate next steps as indicated by the screening tool if they do not pass the screening.

Peel Public Health recommends that schools verify each day that students, staff, and visitors pass the screening, especially during periods of increased risk (e.g., during/after an outbreak, after holidays, etc.). Please check with your school and/or school board for more information regarding the circumstances under which daily on-site screening verification will be undertaken at your school.

**3) Testing**

If your child does not pass daily screening, they should not attend school. They should get tested immediately if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 and self-isolate in accordance with child guidance. If they do not have any symptoms of COVID-19 but were exposed to someone who has COVID-19, they should follow the testing instructions as detailed on our website: <https://www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus/symptoms/>.

**Health  
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Please visit Peel Public Health's [website](#) for an up-to-date list of testing locations that are available in Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga, including sites that accept walk-in visits. Please see the [Ontario government's full list of testing locations](#) for more information.

**4) Vaccination**

Peel Public Health strongly recommends that eligible children born in 2009 or earlier get vaccinated to reduce their risk of infection and spread and to be protected from rare but severe COVID-19 outcomes. Parents of children who are not eligible to be vaccinated (born in 2010 or later) should also be vaccinated to protect their children. High community uptake of vaccination is the most effective measure to prevent spread of COVID-19 in schools.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccine please visit [About the COVID-19 vaccines](#) on the Region of Peel website. Appointments are available and all Peel clinics are accepting walk-ins for all eligible age groups. Visit the [Get the Vaccine](#) web page for information about clinics close to where you live.

**5) Back to School Webinar- Sept 2, 2021**

Peel Public Health will be hosting a Back-to-School webinar on September 2, 2021 at 7:00-7:45 pm. This webinar will include information for parents and students about COVID-19 prevention and control measures for the 2021-2022 school year. Speakers include:

Dr. Monica Hau, Associate Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health

Dr. Alia Sunderji, Pediatric Emergency Physician, Hospital for Sick Children

We welcome you to join! For information on how to access the webinar, please visit our website at: <https://www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus/schools/>. Please note that a version of this webinar will be made available in French with details to follow when they become available.

For more information about your child's safe return to school this fall, please visit the Region of Peel's [Going to school during COVID-19](#) page. Peel Public Health safety measures are based on current COVID-19 case rates in our community and may be subject to change if COVID-19 case counts increase. Please refer to your school's website for information that is specific to your school. Thank you for supporting your child's education and the school community by doing all that you can to keep our children and schools safe.

Sincerely,



Lawrence C. Loh, MD, MPH, FCFP, FRCPC, FACPM (*he/his*)  
Medical Officer of Health  
Region of Peel