



Dear Parents/Caregivers

**Please note:** This letter will be posted on our Bert Edwards Webpage

I would like to thank you for your ongoing support during this week as school staff prepared to welcome all students back to school on Monday, January 10th for face-to-face learning. The Province provided guidance to schools and school districts on implementing extra precautions to keep schools safe for students, teachers and staff. I would like to share the enhanced safety measures that will be in place when students return to school Monday:

- School events and assemblies will be virtual;
- Adult-only meetings will be virtual, whenever possible;
- Visitors to the school will be limited to those who provide direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing (e.g., teacher candidates, meal program volunteers, etc.);
- Spectators at school events, including sporting events, are not permitted;
- School classrooms will be reconfigured to maximize the amount of personal spacing available;
- Break times will be staggered and students will use outdoor classroom doors to reduce the congestion in hallways and shared spaces during transition and break times;
- Restricting the sharing of food among students (e.g., birthday cupcakes).

These enhanced safety measures are layered upon these existing preventive measures that continue to be in place in our school.

- Completing the [daily health checklist](#) or using the [K to 12 Health Check App](#)
- Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or have symptoms
- Using available space to spread out, and to respect others personal space
- Students (K-7) and staff wearing a mask when in schools or riding a bus
- Regular and effective hand washing and/or sanitizing
- Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces at least once a day

Our school's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan has been updated to include all enhanced safety measures, and is attached to this email and posted on our BEST webpage. Please take the time to review the amended plan and continue to support and follow the health measures that are being implemented in schools to keep schools safe for students, teachers, and staff.

### **Continuity of Learning Plans**

Staff also spent this week developing our school's Continuity of Learning Plan to support ongoing student learning, should there be unusually high absenteeism of students and/or staff in our school. This document is also attached to this email, and available on our Bert Edwards webpage. Our school's Continuity of Learning Plan provides information to parents/caregivers about what learning support would look like should there be a need to move away from face-to-face instruction. The following four scenarios of providing learning are documented within the plan.

- Scenario One: Face-to-Face Programming with Enhanced Safety Measures (our current scenario)
- Scenario Two: Hybrid Learning (Face-to-face and online or paper programming)
- Scenario Three: Partial or Full Functional Closure of School
- Scenario Four: Online Learning

Please read through our Continuity of Learning Plan to understand the specifics of each scenario and the learning that you can expect to be provided to your child.

Our Continuity of Learning Plan is intended to support students who are away from school for an extended absence due to self-isolation because of sickness, are presenting with symptoms, or if our school needs to functionally close because high absenteeism of staff prevents the safe operation of the school.

### **School Exposure Notifications and Contact Tracing**

In a call with the Ministry of Education today, school district leaders learned that public notification of exposures is no longer a useful tool for preventing spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The increased transmissibility of the Omicron variant and the shorter incubation period, results in more people being infected quicker, which makes contact tracing ineffective, and in some ways, even impossible. The direction from Interior Health for anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 is to self-report a positive test, self-isolate, and notify close contacts. This information, along with examples of close contacts, can be found on the [Interior Health website](#).

I appreciate that this January's unique start has been challenging in many ways. I do, however, want to reassure you that both your child's safety and education continue to be the top priorities of the school staff at Bert Edwards Science and Technology School.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me by phone or email if you have any questions or concerns, so that I can help support you and your child's learning.

Respectfully,

Mr. F. Law  
Principal  
Bert Edwards Science and Technology School