



RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDE 2020-2021

Welcoming our students and staff safely back to school



As of August 14, 2020



Table of Contents

1. Background	1
2. Equity and Inclusion.....	1
3. Preparing Our Schools	1
3.1 School Attendance	2
3.2 Admission for Students to Transfer from Remote learning to Local Schools After September 2020	2
3.3 Preparing our School Sites – General Site Preparation Measures.....	2
3.4 Water fountains.....	3
3.5 Custodial support in schools	3
3.6 Physical spaces within classrooms.....	3
3.7 Health Screening.....	3
3.8 Outbreak Protocol.....	3
3.9 Contact Tracing – Students.....	3
3.10 Parents, Volunteers and Visitors Within Our Schools	4
3.11 Meetings.....	4
3.12 Wellness Room.....	4
3.13 Transportation.....	4
4. The Learning Environment.....	5
4.1 Elementary Class Organization	5
4.2 Secondary Class Organization.....	5
4.3 Arrival and Dismissal.....	5
4.4 Health and Safety practices – Hand Hygiene	6
4.5 Health and Safety practices - Wearing of Masks or Face Coverings	6
4.6 Personal belongings & storage	6
4.7 Learning materials	7
4.8 Recess	7
4.9 Lunch.....	7
4.10 Washrooms.....	7
4.11 Classroom doors	7
4.12 Use of outdoor space	7
4.13 Communication to Parents/Guardians	8
4.14 Learning Commons	8
5. Teaching and Learning	8
5.1 Mental health and well-being.....	8
5.2 Transition to a new grade.....	8



5.3 Remote learning for the 2020-2021 School Year 8

5.4 Assessment and Evaluation 10

5.5 Secondary School Students Assessment and Evaluation..... 10

5.6 Provincial EQAO Assessments..... 10

5.7 Music..... 10

5.8 Physical Education, Science, The Arts, and Technology-Based Courses 11

5.9 Sports (Intramurals and Interscholastic Athletics)..... 11

6. Secondary School Program Consideration: Student Success Focus 11

6.1 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs 11

6.2 OYAP and Dual Credit programs..... 11

6.3 Co-operative Education..... 11

6.4 Community Involvement / Community Service Hours..... 11

6.5 Literacy Requirement for Graduation 12

7. Special Education 12

7.1 Supporting Students with Special Education Needs..... 12

7.2 Supporting Students with Mental Health Needs..... 12

7.3 Transition to school..... 12

8. Transition to Kindergarten..... 12

9. International Education 13

10. Preparing Staff 13

10.1 Health and Safety: A Shared Responsibility 13

10.2 Staff meetings, staff rooms, and gatherings..... 13

10.3 Shared resources and materials..... 13

11. School Operations..... 14

11.1 Fire and Lockdown Drills 14

11.2 Field trips 14

11.3 Community use of schools 14

11.4 Assemblies 14

11.5 Electronic payments..... 14

11.6 Play Structures..... 14

11.7 Student Nutrition Programs..... 14

12. Conclusion..... 14

1. Background

The Upper Canada District School Board is looking forward to welcoming students and staff safely back to school in September. The school district, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and with our local Medical Officers of Health, will be reopening schools for instruction on September 4, 2020. Changes to routines and procedures are to be expected as we put requirements for enhanced health and hygiene practices in place in our schools.

The operational practices that are outlined in this document are based on [UCDSB's School Reopening Plan – July 2020](#), which was reviewed by the UCDSB Board of Trustees (July 2020) and the Ontario Ministry of Education (August 2020). As our school staff turn their attention to the start up to the new school year, we want to ensure that they have the most recent information and specific advice from the Ministry of Education and the Chief Medical Officers of Health to support the reopening of their school site.

These operational procedures and practices will evolve as new information becomes available and adjustments are necessary to respond to the most recent information that translates into maintaining safe, clean, and supportive school settings.

2. Equity and Inclusion

While the pandemic has caused us to revisit and adjust a number of operational practices, our school district remains committed to reducing achievement gaps and improving learning outcomes for all students. To that end, we will provide learning and working environments that promote safe, respectful and inclusive practices. We will do so by reviewing our internal approach to operational planning and continuing to expand our focus on responsive and culturally relevant pedagogy in schools. As well, we will continue to identify and address barriers to learning and take appropriate action to deal with discriminatory behaviour.

The UCDSB and its staff remain committed to our goal of a 90% graduation rate. A high school diploma enables the prospect of each person's pursuit of further learning and employability and, as such, is a key anti-poverty measure that improves the health of all our communities.

3. Preparing Our Schools

The health, safety and well-being of our students and our staff is a top priority as the UCDSB reopens schools for the 2020-2021 school. Current evidence from public health officials and experience from the operation of Day Care Sites throughout the province over the past four months supports the concept that children can return to school when additional measures and specific operating procedures focusing on enhanced health and hygiene are in place.

3.1 School Attendance

All school sites operated by the UCDSB will be open for the start of the new school year, with the first day of school being Friday, September 4, 2020 for all students.

The Ministry of Education has indicated that, for the 2020-2021 School Year, in-person attendance is voluntary and parents may choose between sending their child to their local school or, having their child learn remotely from home. A registration survey of parents will occur during the week of August 10, 2020, so that families can clearly indicate if their children will return to in-person learning at a physical school site or if they will be opting out of in-person learning.

3.2 Admission for Students to Transfer from Remote learning to Local Schools After September 2020

With the need for our school district to establish and effectively deliver remote learning across the district to potentially hundreds of students, families may not be able to immediately transfer between remote learning and in-person learning as changes in enrollment will impact staffing and class sizes.

As a result, moving between remote and in-person learning will take place at specific admission intervals set by the school district. Individual requests to move between remote and in-person learning will be examined on a case-by-case basis pending class size availability.

Elementary students seeking to move from remote learning to face-to-face learning will have the opportunity to do so at predetermined intervals.

Secondary students seeking to return to face-to-face learning from remote learning will have the opportunity to do so at the beginning of a new quadmester.

Secondary students seeking registration to a new school, including transfers between schools in the UCDSB, may not be guaranteed face-to-face learning and may need to be enrolled in remote learning until the beginning of the next quadmester.

3.3 Preparing our School Sites – General Site Preparation Measures

There will be changes evident at schools and the central office. Plexiglass, where possible, has been installed in areas that involve the direct service to members of the public. Hand sanitizing stations have been set up for use immediately upon entering any of our buildings.

Each school will determine where signage and markings are required, inside and outside of the school, to assist students in maintaining physical distance from each other. Locations include entrances to the school, classrooms, exits, washrooms, Learning Commons, areas where students line up for entry or exit and other common areas in the school. Markings and signage may also be used to indicate traffic flow, should schools deem it necessary for physical distancing to identify directional traffic patterns within the school. Explicit teaching and

opportunities for practice by students to develop comfort and familiarity of these requirements will take place early and often upon return to school, and throughout the school year.

3.4 Water fountains

Only water bottle filling stations will be available for use in the schools. All drinking fountains will be decommissioned. Students should come to school each day with a full water bottle, labelled with the student's name.

3.5 Custodial support in schools

All custodians will be conducting stepped-up cleaning with more frequent cleaning of high touch areas and shared spaces. Hand sanitizing stations and/or sinks with soap and paper towel are available in each classroom for frequent hand washing.

3.6 Physical spaces within classrooms

Classroom educators will arrange furniture within the classroom to promote physical distancing. Carpets will be removed from classrooms. Students will be assigned to a workspace within the classroom and the teacher will maintain a record of the seating assignment. Furniture in Kindergarten classrooms should be arranged to identify physically distanced play areas for smaller groups of students. Plush toys, resources and equipment that are not easily cleaned are to be removed from student access.

3.7 Health Screening

Parents and staff will follow established public health protocols for screening. Parents will receive a Parent Screening Tool, which is currently being developed by our local public health units, for daily health screening before sending children to school. Staff will be expected to self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms each day and will report to their supervisor and their local health unit if they are experiencing symptoms.

Students and staff are **NOT TO ATTEND** school or their workplace setting if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. If anyone is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, they are to consult with public health to determine next steps.

3.8 Outbreak Protocol

Our local public health professionals will provide all local school boards with an Outbreak Protocol that schools will need to follow should a case of COVID-19 be confirmed at a school. Any person who has been diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must follow the directions of Public Health prior to returning to school.

3.9 Contact Tracing – Students

Records will be maintained at each school site and by each classroom teacher detailing students in attendance at the school. Classroom teachers will also keep records of seating assignments in the classroom.

3.10 Parents, Volunteers and Visitors Within Our Schools

In general, and during this period of the pandemic, visitors and volunteers will not be permitted into school buildings or workplaces at this time. This includes family members of our students.

In the case of an urgent matter, visitors wishing to access a school or central office must call the school or central office to schedule an appointment before appearing on site. Unscheduled visitors – including family members of child(ren) – may not be able to enter the location. Wherever possible, telephone meetings with parents/guardians, vendors and outside agencies will be held.

Any visitor or non-employee that is authorized to have access to a school or workplaces operated by the Upper Canada District School Board sites will be required to provide contact information which will include name, phone number, email coordinates, the time of arrival at the school and the time of departure from the school. Any authorized visitor to the school will be required to respond to COVID-19 screening questions before being permitted to enter the school.

In accordance with provincial regulations, emergency services personnel, public health inspectors, and inspectors from the Ministry of Labour continue to have access to school sites as per past practices.

3.11 Meetings

Until further notice, all meetings involving non-employees are to occur in a virtual manner. This includes School Council meetings, case conferences, assessment feedback meetings, parent-teacher meetings, etc. Further guidance for staff meetings is provided in the School Operations section of this document.

3.12 Wellness Room

Each school will identify a separate room as a Wellness Room. This room will be used for the purpose of isolating a person who has become ill at school. The ill person will remain in the room until they can be picked up from school. A COVID-19 kit will be provided for use by staff and the student in the Wellness room. The kit will contain resources such as personal protective equipment (e.g., face masks, gloves), along with instructions on how to properly use the resources. An internal procedure for the use, management, and maintenance of the room will be provided to school principals in a separate bulletin and will be distributed to staff before the staff development sessions for the September 2020 PA Days.

3.13 Transportation

Active forms of transportation are encouraged where possible (e.g., walking or biking). School bus transportation continues to be available for eligible students. Specific Health and Safety measures will be in place on the school bus. The student transportation consortium, STEO, is

providing parents with the option of opting out of student transportation (<https://form.iotform.com/202236007099956>).

Further information regarding transportation is available on the Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO) website (www.steo.ca).

Drop-off and pick-up procedures for parents who select to drive their children to school will be established and communicated by each school.

4. The Learning Environment

4.1 Elementary Class Organization

All Kindergarten to Grade 8 students will be cohorted with their assigned class. Schools that typically practice blending of students in French Immersion and Core programming **will not** blend students during the period of the pandemic in order to reduce the number of direct and indirect contacts that students will have throughout the school day.

As a result of this direction to schools, some reorganization of classes may need to occur. Students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day and teachers who teach multiple classes will travel to the classrooms where their students are located.

4.2 Secondary Class Organization

UCDSB secondary schools will return to full-day instruction for all students in September. However, the day schedule will be different from past years to accommodate cohorting of students.

Secondary schools will adopt a quadmester system that allows for fewer student-to-student and student-to-staff contacts. Students will take two courses at a time over a nine-week period. Each class will consist of 150 minutes of instruction and will be separated by a lunch break. Students will take one class in the morning and the second in the afternoon.

4.3 Arrival and Dismissal

Each school will identify an arrival and dismissal procedure for the school. Arrival and dismissal procedures developed by schools will include practices to receive and dismiss students who take the school bus, students who walk or ride a bike to school, and students who are driven by parents. Procedures will have to be developed by schools, in collaboration with on-site child-care personnel, for the transfer of students from and to on-site child-care.

Each school will identify entry procedures making use, where possible, of multiple entry doors to promote physical distancing. Schools may need to stagger the entry and dismissal times in order to maintain physical distancing.

Schools will also develop their own procedures for receiving students who are late to school as parents will not be able to enter the school to sign students in, as is current practice.

4.4 Health and Safety practices – Hand Hygiene

All staff and students will be expected to sanitize their hands upon each entry into the school building, including re-entering after recess and outdoor time. Students will practice routines for regular hand washing or hand sanitizing. Students will also be explicitly taught respiratory etiquette, including coughing into their elbow, proper disposal of tissues and the proper wearing of face masks.

4.5 Health and Safety practices - Wearing of Masks or Face Coverings

All staff and students in Grade 4-12 must wear masks or face coverings while inside the school when walking in common areas and where physical distancing in the classroom is not possible. It is strongly encouraged that students in Kindergarten – Grade 3 also wear masks. Staff will work with students to demonstrate how to safely put on, and take off a mask, and how to properly store it when it is not being used.

Limited exemptions on the requirement for students to wear masks or face coverings can be presented to the school principal by the student’s parent/guardian when the child:

- has an underlying health condition that prevents them from safely wearing a mask, or;
- is unable to put on or remove their mask without the assistance of another person, or;
- is reasonably accommodated by not wearing a mask under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19, as amended.

Masks are not necessary in outdoor spaces. Educators will develop routines in their classrooms to prepare students for lining up and walking to the recess yard in a physically distanced manner as masks will not be taken outside to the recess yard.

In accordance with the direction from the [Ministry of Education](#) “medical masks and eye protection (i.e. face shield) will be provided for all teachers and other staff of school boards. All school-based staff will be required to wear masks, with reasonable exceptions for medical conditions.”

4.6 Personal belongings & storage

Students are to limit the personal belongings that they bring to school. Items that are permitted are a backpack, water bottle, sunscreen, lunch, clothing (e.g. change of clothes for Kindergarten students). Personal belongings will be stored at the students’ desks. Lockers will not be used by staff or students. Hooks and cubbies that are located outside of classrooms will not be used by staff or students. This will be reviewed as the colder weather approaches and heavier clothing and boots become necessary.

4.7 Learning materials

Staff will limit the sharing of learning materials between students. Students will be provided with the materials necessary to access the curriculum. Parents may wish to provide additional materials (e.g., pencils, scissors, etc.) for their children. These resources are not to be shared between children. Classroom materials and resources that must be shared will be disinfected between use by students (e.g. computers, headsets, etc.).

4.8 Recess

Schools may develop a staggered recess schedule with designated spaces on the yard for cohorts to play. Students will engage in recess with their specified cohort of classmates. Schools are encouraged to provide bins of equipment and toys to cohorts for their specific use during outdoor play. Play structures may be used by cohorts of students when physical distancing can be maintained. Handwashing/sanitizing before and after recess will be required.

4.9 Lunch

Elementary schools will develop a lunch schedule that respects contractual obligations for staff. Students will eat in their own classrooms and schools will develop supervision schedules to ensure adequate supervision is in place when students are eating. This may result in changes to the length of time provided for students to eat lunch and the time allocated for play outdoors.

Hot lunches will not be available in elementary schools during the pandemic.

Cafeterias will be available for food service following all health and safety requirements. Schools will ensure that staff and students follow physical distancing, masking and hand hygiene protocols.

4.10 Washrooms

Where possible, schools are to designate specific washrooms to specific cohorts of students. Teachers will also be required to maintain a tracking record to note when a student has left the classroom to use the washroom and when the student has returned. Schools will develop a washroom schedule to limit the number of students accessing washrooms at one time.

4.11 Classroom doors

Where possible, classroom doors should be left open to limit the number of people who are touching the door throughout the school day.

4.12 Use of outdoor space

Educators are encouraged to use outdoor space for teaching and learning as much as possible.

4.13 Communication to Parents/Guardians

Schools will communicate with parents/guardians through electronic means or by phone. The school agenda will not travel between home and school during the pandemic. Parents are encouraged to sign up to use My Family Room (myfamilyroom.ca) and to follow the school on the social media platforms used by the school. Educators will communicate early in the school year to parents about the means and frequency of communication that they should expect from the classroom level.

4.14 Learning Commons

Each school may develop a schedule for the use of the Learning Commons by cohorts of students. Where possible, it is recommended that bins of books be assigned to each cohort and placed in the classrooms. Students may select reading material from the bins for use in the classroom. Books will not travel to and from homes. When books are returned to the Learning Commons, they will remain out of circulation for seven days.

5. Teaching and Learning

5.1 Mental health and well-being

A focus on the whole student will be the priority for the return to school. Staff will work diligently to create warm, welcoming and supportive classrooms for their students and will assist students in becoming familiar with the new routines and practices that will be in place for health and safety purposes. A primary focus upon returning to the school environment, secondary to health and safety, will be on mental health and well-being. Resources and professional learning will be provided to schools with an expectation that daily activities will occur in each school that will focus on mental health and well-being. Targeted interventions will be available throughout the school year, as they have been in the past, to students who are identified by schools as requiring further support.

5.2 Transition to a new grade

Class composition is never homogeneous, and students bring different levels of prior knowledge with them. Educators will spend time determining areas of academic need for each student, and they will differentiate the instruction to support each student. Educators will focus on the big ideas of the curriculum, identify learning gaps, and use high yield strategies to support student learning and readiness for new content and skill development.

5.3 Remote learning for the 2020-2021 School Year

By its very nature, remote learning is not the same learning experience as what students experience when attending in-person at their local school. The remote learning program for 2020-2021 will be delivered by teachers who have been assigned a cohort of remote learners. This will not be the same teacher that is teaching students in the classroom face-to-face. As

well, the amount of contact time with teachers and peers each day will differ, compared to the daily school experience.

Remote learning at both the elementary and secondary level requires internet connectivity and access to a personal computer or laptop for the duration of the school day. Students can expect to have five hours of learning opportunities throughout the day. These opportunities will in real time/live (synchronous) and done independently (asynchronous learning).

The remote learning program will use the following tools to provide online instruction to students:

- Microsoft Teams
- Brightspace – D2L
- UCDSB assigned student email address

There may be an opportunity for the school board to loan out devices for those who choose to do remote learning that do not have a device for their child to use. However, our current inventory may not allow for all students who need a laptop to receive one.

5.3.1 Remote learning - K-8

The Ministry of Education has provided an opportunity for elementary students to elect to learn remotely for the 2020-2021 school year.

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 who choose remote learning (fully online from home) will be assigned to a single class. Each class will have an assigned teacher and students will be provided with a daily schedule of subjects according to a 5-hour instructional day. Students learning remotely will have opportunities for live contact with a teacher and synchronous learning each day. Learning will be based on overall expectations across all subjects. Attendance will be taken on a daily basis.

Students who choose to learn fully online from home will have the opportunity to return to face-to-face learning at the home school at pre-determined intervals throughout the school year. All decisions regarding future intake of students will be subject to Ministry of Education and Public Health guidelines to support student and staff health, safety and well-being.

5.3.2 Remote learning - Grade 9- 12

The Ministry of Education has provided opportunity for secondary students to elect to attend school remotely for the 2020-21 school year. Secondary online programming will be aligned with the quadmester model being implemented in the face-to-face program at all UCDSB secondary schools. In this model, students will study and complete two courses in the first nine weeks of the school year. Students then take two additional courses in the next nine weeks. As such, students will complete four full courses by the end of January 2021.

Secondary students who choose remote learning will be assigned two online courses for a period of nine weeks, each with a dedicated online teacher and daily synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities. Students will be directed to take any compulsory courses that they would have taken face-to-face at their home school in the same quadmester so that they are able to maintain a seamless pathway to subsequent courses and graduation upon return to face-to-face learning. A course selection process will occur with each student who elects for full remote learning and will be informed by the existing student timetable at the mainstream school. Attendance will be taken on a daily basis for each course in the same manner as in the face-to-face learning model.

Secondary students who wish to return to face-to-face learning will have the opportunity to do so at the beginning of the next quadmester.

5.4 Assessment and Evaluation

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Assessment and evaluation practices should include assessments to identify students' strengths and any gaps in learning to ensure that students have the fundamental building blocks in advance of new content. Assessment practices will allow both flexibility and multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and application of curriculum expectations.

5.5 Secondary School Students Assessment and Evaluation

In addition to completing learning activities and assignments to demonstrate understanding of the curriculum, secondary school students will be expected to complete large projects (known as summative tasks) and final examinations in some courses.

5.6 Provincial EQAO Assessments

Grade 3 and 6 provincial EQAO assessments will not occur this school year. Information regarding the Grade 9 EQAO assessment and the Grade 10 Literacy Test is not available at this time.

5.7 Music

Most overall learning expectations for the music curriculum can be met without the use of instruments in both the elementary and secondary program. A variety of delivery options may be considered to meet the music curriculum's overall expectations, which could include lower-risk creative performance opportunities (e.g. in-school instruction in larger spaces, restricting the type of instruments in a group setting) or in-person teaching and instruction with no live performance.

Choir practices/performances and band practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher risk of transmission. As such, it is recommended that these be cancelled at this time. This recommendation will be reviewed as more information is made available.

5.8 Physical Education, Science, The Arts, and Technology-Based Courses

These courses may continue and educators will ensure that health and safety requirements are in place to maintain physical distancing and limit the shared use of equipment. Where equipment is needed for different classes, the equipment must be sanitized before use and frequent handwashing will be practiced.

5.9 Sports (Intramurals and Interscholastic Athletics)

Inter-school sports will not be occurring at this time. Schools may, however, offer co-curricular (such as some intramural sports activities), if cohorting requirements can be maintained and physical distancing is possible. Areas that are used must be able to be cleaned between cohorts.

6. Secondary School Program Consideration: Student Success Focus

The UCDSB remains committed to its goal of a 90% graduation rate. Student Success teams in schools will monitor student achievement and intervene when necessary to ensure the best outcome for each student.

6.1 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs

SHSM programs will continue. Some programs may need to be modified based upon student access to co-op and some certification courses that may not run during the pandemic. SHSM leads and school administrators are encouraged to reach out to our Learning Partners regarding procedures for ‘overrides’ and other solutions to ensure program completion.

6.2 OYAP and Dual Credit programs

OYAP and Dual Credit programs will also continue. Some programs will be limited by pandemic restrictions. Students should check with their Guidance Department regarding courses and programs impacted.

6.3 Co-operative Education

Co-operative education will continue. Some traditional placements may be possible, and others will be required to be completed in a virtual format.

6.4 Community Involvement / Community Service Hours

The completion of 40 hours of Community Involvement will resume as a requirement for secondary school graduation for 2020-2021. Students may complete their hours in virtual setting if possible, or in a safe setting outside of the school.

6.5 Literacy Requirement for Graduation

Graduating students must also complete their literacy requirement. Students who do not have their literacy requirement who wish to graduate mid-year should ensure that they take the Literacy course in the first or second quadmester.

7. Special Education

7.1 Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) will continue to be a key document in supporting students with special education needs. It is recognized that goal development, implementation, monitoring and assessment will look differently for students who are continuing in the remote learning environment. The school-based team, with the support of the central Special Education Team, will develop and implement programming for students with special education needs for either of the learning options available to students (face-to-face or on-line).

7.2 Supporting Students with Mental Health Needs

Mental health and well-being will be a prevalent focus, particularly at the outset of the school year. The central Mental Health and Wellness Team will provide professional development and resources for use in schools to support social-emotional learning, resilience, re-engaging in learning, while continuing to be responsive to particular concerns and needs that are brought forward by schools. Counselling supports and connections to partner agencies will continue to be areas of focus for members of the central team.

[School Mental Health Ontario](#) will be providing boards with a toolkit of resources and professional learning materials directed at system staff, school-based teams, students and parents. Further information will be shared when the toolkit is available.

The Special Education and Mental Health and Wellness Department will continue to publish regular newsletters for parents which will be shared digitally by schools and posted to the UCDSB website. Information will also be shared through Twitter ([@UCDSBWellness](#)).

7.3 Transition to school

Schools may require additional time to prepare for a safe and welcoming return for students with significant special education needs. Each school will work with parents of students with significant special education needs to develop a plan for return, which may include gradual entry plans for students.

8. Transition to Kindergarten

School closures, in many cases, did not provide an opportunity for students and parents of junior kindergarten students to visit the school as would typically have occurred as part of the transition process. All schools engaged in various virtual transition activities to welcome

students and families to the school community. Noting that junior kindergarten marks the beginning of the school experience for our youngest of learners and their parents, schools have the flexibility to welcome families through a staggered entry, small-group cohort process.

Schools will need to determine if this meets the needs of families within their communities and the capacity of educators to be available to welcome smaller groupings of students, continually adding students to the cohorts until the full complement of students in the cohort is achieved.

Schools will also have the flexibility to determine class compositions. Some schools may choose to organize kindergarten classrooms according to first and second-year cohorts or may choose to continue blending year-one and year-two students.

9. International Education

International students who have remained in Canada since school closure in the spring of 2020 will return to learning in UCDSB schools for 2020-2021 in either the face-to-face or remote learning model. Students who returned to their home country will have the opportunity to engage in remote learning with the UCDSB. We look forward to the time when international students are able to travel and safely rejoin our UCDSB programs.

10. Preparing Staff

10.1 Health and Safety: A Shared Responsibility

UCDSB, in collaboration with our local Public Health departments and our Joint Health and Safety Committee, will provide training to all UCDSB staff. The plan, including requirements for training, will be provided to staff during the professional development days prior to the beginning of the school year for students.

A safety checklist will be provided for use at all UCDSB sites during Health and Safety Inspections to ensure that the site is ready for occupants and prepared to meet the requirements related to the pandemic response.

10.2 Staff meetings, staff rooms, and gatherings

Staff may meet in person where two meters of physical distancing exists and face coverings are worn by all. Consideration should be given to offering a remote staff meeting option, even when some staff may be on site. A separate bulletin regarding the operation and access of staff rooms will be and will be distributed to staff before the staff development sessions for the September 2020 PA Days.

10.3 Shared resources and materials

Where resources and materials must be shared by staff, cleaning and disinfecting practices will be established and communicated to all staff.

11. School Operations

11.1 Fire and Lockdown Drills

Fire drills and lockdown practices will continue to occur. Educators will work with their classes to identify safe and effective ways to meet the requirements of both fire drills and lockdown drills.

11.2 Field trips

Field trips will not be occurring at this time. Educators are encouraged to explore virtual field trips.

11.3 Community use of schools

Community use of schools, for indoor use, will be delayed and re-evaluated the week of October 5, 2020. Requests to use exterior spaces will be accepted starting August 31st, 2020.

11.4 Assemblies

Large gatherings and assemblies will not occur. Considerations should be given to offering sessions virtually.

11.5 Electronic payments

Any collection of funds should be done through electronic means. Cash should not be collected in schools. It is anticipated that there will be minimum requirement for collection of money.

11.6 Play Structures

Play structures may be used by cohorts of students when physical distancing can be maintained. Handwashing/sanitizing before and after recess will be required.

11.7 Student Nutrition Programs

Nutrition programs may continue in schools where a “grab and go” format for the distribution of food can be introduced.

12. Conclusion

As schools prepare to re-open, the UCDSB continues to work in close collaboration with our local Medical Officers of Health and receives guidance from the Ministry of Education. We will continue to need to be flexible during the pandemic response as the landscape is ever-changing and new information is received regularly. The health and safety of our staff, our students and our families remain at the forefront of all of the planning and preparation that is occurring for the return to school. We are excited to welcome students back to the school environment in September and are thankful for all of the work and effort of all staff in the preparations that they have undertaken in these unprecedented times.