

January 13, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In response to climbing cases of COVID-19 throughout the province, [the province has issued a stay-at-home order and introduced new health and safety measures](#) for our schools when we return to in-person learning.

While the province indicated that schools west of us (in and around the Greater Toronto Area) will remain closed beyond January 25, the province **has not indicated** whether the return to in-person learning will be delayed for schools located within our region, impacting schools within the Upper Canada District School Board, at this time.

By January 20, the Chief Medical Officer of Health will advise the Ministry of Education on which public health units will be permitted to have schools resume in-person instruction. We will provide another update when we receive that information.

Yesterday's announcement does not impact how we are currently operating and providing instruction. We will continue with the remote learning plans that are in place to support students learning synchronously, asynchronously and who have special education needs.

When students do return to in-person learning, the province has indicated that there will be new health and safety measures in place, which will include the following:

- masking for Grade 1-3 students will be required, in addition to Grade 4-12 students. Kindergarten students will be encouraged to wear masks, but it will not be mandatory;
- masking requirements will also be in place for specified outdoor activities where physical distancing is not possible;
- enhanced screening protocols; and
- expanded targeted testing.

At this time, we do not know what the enhanced screening protocols are or if targeted testing for COVID-19 will be available within our district. We will share more information when we receive it.

We understand that yesterday's news may be worrisome and that the emergency stay-at-home orders may place strain on your family. Please be aware of the [mental health supports](#) and [community resources](#) in place that may be able to help your family during these uncertain times.

Be well, stay safe and stay home as much as possible.

Sincerely,  
Stephen Sliwa  
Director of Education  
Upper Canada District School Board

**John McAllister**  
Chair

**Stephen Sliwa**  
Director