

Conventional Model

Every day in-school learning with enhanced public health measures

Introduction

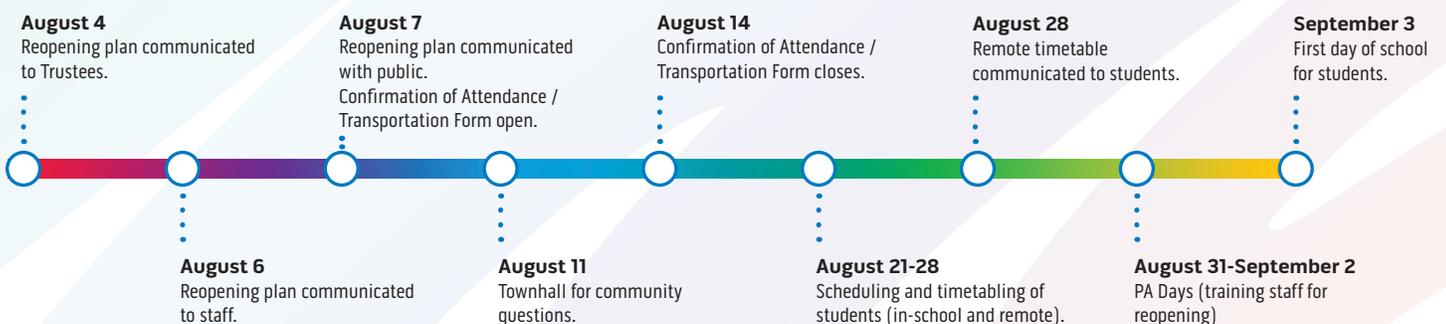
As we prepare for a return to school that is unprecedented, the health and safety of our students and staff is top priority in our planning. The decisions we make in all areas of concern – health and safety, teaching and learning, transportation – are made with extensive consultation with the Ministry of Education, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, and our community members and stakeholders.

Lakehead Public Schools received confirmation of models for return from the Ministry of Education on July 30, 2020 but has been preparing plans for return since late May. These plans are being shared with our families, staff, and the community so informed decisions can be made for our children. This document is intended to provide families the information they need to choose how their child(ren) will participate in school in September: in-person at school or learning remotely at home.

Our Guiding Principles support the work and development of these plans:



Return to Learning Timeline



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Models for Return

On July 30th, the Ministry of Education confirmed the model for return to school for Lakehead Public School students in September.

The description of the models refers to cohorts. A cohort refers to a group of students that remain or are considered together, and would remain together for large periods of time. A cohort varies in size, and in these models, a class is considered a cohort. A group of students on a bus every day would represent another cohort.

Elementary

- All students K-8 will attend school 5 days per week in their normal classes with normal class sizes – each class is a cohort and every effort will be made to reduce the mixing of cohorts
- Start and end times as usual, but lunches and recesses will be staggered to reduce contact between classes
- Students will receive the full breadth of programming, except for instrumental music classes that use wind or brass instruments. This means that they will see itinerant teachers, like second language, arts, and specialist rotary teachers as well as their homeroom teacher.

Secondary

- All students 9-12 will attend school 5 days per week with normal class sizes
- Students will take 2 courses per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon
- They will take the same two courses from September 3, 2020 to November 5, 2020 which will be referred to as the first quadmester, then two new courses from November 11, 2020 to January 25, 2021
- The third quadmester will be two new courses from February 1, 2021 to April 14, 2021, and finally, the last quadmester, the final two courses, from April 20, 2021 to June 22, 2021.
- Exams will occur after each quadmester
- All courses will be offered except instrumental music class that use wind or brass instruments, or vocals
- Download the Quadmester Calendar from our website: <https://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/school-calendars/>

This model for return is known as a Conventional Model. We also have plans prepared for an Adapted Model (alternating days – half at school, half at home) and a Fully Remote Model (all students learning from home) should the COVID-19 situation in Thunder Bay change. If we are required to change the model of delivery, that decision will be made by the Ministry of Education in consultation with provincial and local public health officials.

Pre-Registration

The Ministry of Education is requiring all students to pre-register for the 2020-2021 school year. This is to determine class sizes, staffing numbers, and levels of support and resources (custodial, PPE) required to open our schools.

Lakehead Public Schools conducted a survey collecting pre-registration information, and parents were asked if they would send their child to school under a Conventional or Adaptive model. The responses for the Conventional Model will be the numbers we work with as we staff schools and create online classes.



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If parents would like to change their registration information, they can do so in two ways:

1. Email: helpdesk@lakeheadschoos.ca
2. Telephone the help desk at: (807) 625-5162

Please be prepared to provide the following information for each child you have registered at school:

- Child's name
- School
- Grade in September
- Attending in-person in September (yes or no)
- Require transportation in September (yes or no)

If no call or email is received, parents' previous choice will stand and their child(ren) will be placed in a class as indicated (in-school or remote learning).

Parents and guardians who have not yet completed the registration survey may do so up until August 14, 2020 by following this link: <https://www.lakeheadschoos.ca/returntolearning/>

If a parent chooses not to send their child back to school in-person, they will automatically be placed on a remote learner list, and they will be assigned a timetable and schedule for learning with remote teachers. Every effort will be made to honour secondary students' course selections.

It is understandable that some families might have concerns and will keep their children home to start the school year. If families change their mind and would like to have their child(ren) attend in-person, there are specific re-entry times in the school year where this can happen. These dates must be adhered to in order to balance staffing, cohort sizes, and ensure appropriate resources for schools.

Elementary students can start school on September 3rd, or:

- October 13 (day after Thanksgiving)
- February 1, 2021 (start of Term 2)
- March 22, 2021 (after March Break)

Secondary students can start school on September 3rd, or:

- November 11, 2020 (start of 2nd quadmester), or
- February 1, 2021 (start of 3rd quadmester)
- April 20, 2021 (start of 4th quadmester)

Families should consider all the information in this plan to determine the best learning environment for their children.

Staff Considerations

The health and safety of Lakehead Public Schools educators is critical to the success of reopening our schools. We recognize that staff have concerns about their own well-being as we prepare to return to school and work, and meeting staff needs continues to be a priority.

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Discussions about how to meet various staff needs will take place between staff and Human Resources and will consider medical accommodations and accommodations for family needs (e.g. elder care, vulnerable family member at home, etc.), as well as mental health and well-being needs and support. Human Resources staff will work directly with Principals and Managers to respond to employee needs on a case by case basis. **Staff who have concerns should contact Human Resources before August 14, 2020 to begin those conversations.**

We know that educators are concerned for the health and safety of their students as well as themselves, and that they have a strong desire to safely reconnect with their students. Lakehead Public Schools is committed to providing the appropriate training, guidance and protocols needed for a safe return for students and staff. Much of this training will take place on the three Professional Activity days to start the school year.

Screening of staff for COVID-19 symptoms will occur daily, and in the event of an increase in staff absenteeism, occasional staff rosters have been reviewed and, where appropriate, will be added to in order to meet the needs of schools.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. To that end, the following measures will be in place in all our schools. These measures include personal health and safety, adaptations to physical spaces and timetables, and actions to reduce and contain the spread of infection.

Personal Health and Safety

- Masking will be standard practice in all schools – all staff and students grades 4-12 will be required to wear masks, and students K-3 will be encouraged to wear masks in common areas
- Additional PPE for staff in special circumstances
- Frequent and proper handwashing is one of the most important things we can do to prevent the spread of COVID-19
 - > Sanitizer stations at all school entrances
 - > Many classrooms have sinks
 - > Regularly scheduled handwashing breaks during the day
 - > Younger students will be taught proper technique
- Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing) will be taught and frequent reminders will be placed throughout the schools
- Distancing measures in place, including:
 - > Signage to promote spacing at queuing areas (like sanitizer stations, water filling stations) and provide direction for moving about schools
 - > Scheduling of common areas like gyms and libraries
- Restriction of visitors to schools (appointment only)

Adaptations to Physical Spaces and Timetabling

- Daily cleaning of all spaces

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- Enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces (twice per day)
- Classroom furniture organized to maximize space between students and staff
- Controlled and staggered entry and exit
- Staggered snack and lunch times in elementary schools
- Students eat lunch and snack in their classrooms with their cohort in elementary
- Lunch eaten in morning or designated classroom in secondary schools; students may also leave
- Signage throughout schools providing direction and spacing, including wall and floor signage
- Signage at entries reminding to wear masks, self-assess (with symptom list) and wash hands
- Minimizing of shared materials with frequent cleaning
- Practices and supervision in place at bus and vehicle drop-off points to ensure proper distancing
- Offices equipped to ensure safety of office staff, including signage and barriers
- Lockers will not be used at secondary schools

Actions to Reduce and Contain the Spread of Infection

Lakehead Public Schools continues to work in close partnership with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit regarding efforts to reduce and contain the spread of infection. They have provided us with guidance on screening, tracing, and responding to students and staff who show symptoms, as well as suspected or confirmed cases. The TBDHU will be actively involved working with schools who have suspected or confirmed cases.

- Screening
 - > Students, staff and visitors must complete a self-assessment before entering buildings
 - > Parents/Students must complete a self-assessment before students board a bus
 - > Symptom signage will be clearly posted throughout LPS spaces
 - > Students or staff who are ill should not come to school
 - > Students or staff who are ill or fail the self-assessment must report illness to school for notification to public health authorities
- Symptomatic Students and Staff
 - > Students or staff who develop COVID-19 symptoms while at school must go home immediately. Students waiting to be picked up shall wait in an “unwellness room” and wear a mask while isolating. Staff should physically distance if possible and provide hand sanitizer, tissue, garbage bin as needed. Disinfect the room after the student leaves.
 - > Symptomatic individuals must contact the local assessment centre for testing.
- Suspected Cases
 - > Staff and students who came in close contact with symptomatic individual should self-monitor for symptoms until the test result is returned.

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- > If the symptomatic individual's COVID-19 test result is negative, they can return to work/school 24 hours after symptoms go away, unless they are self-isolating for other reasons (travel outside of Canada or close contact with a confirmed case).
- > If the symptomatic individual's COVID-19 test result is positive, they must self-isolate for 14 days. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 can return to work/school 14 days after their symptoms first appear, as long as symptoms have resolved. There are no tests or clearance letters required for return to work/school.
- Contact Tracing
 - > Class lists will be prepared by August 28, based on student re-registration
 - > A record must be kept of all students (through attendance records) and staff indicating arrival/departure time, contact information, and screening assessment results
 - > Movement of cohorts and students is to be tracked daily by staff
 - > Confirmed cases are reported by the lab to Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU). The TBDHU will follow up with all positive cases and perform a risk assessment of their contacts.
 - > To help support this contact tracing schools must keep daily records of anyone entering the school setting (name, contact info, time of arrival/departure, screening completed).
 - > Contact tracing also applies to school buses and before/after school daycare.
- Outbreak Management
 - > The definition of a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak as outlined by the Ministry of Health will be used to determine an outbreak in a school
 - > Upon receiving a positive laboratory result for COVID-19 the TBDHU will take actions to manage the outbreak within the school
 - > Lakehead Public Schools will work with the TBDHU to manage the outbreak

Mental Health and Well-Being

Lakehead Public Schools will continue to provide the mental health support needed for students through the provision of three secondary social workers and three elementary social workers. Social workers will continue to provide brief treatment and referral services.

The Board Mental Health Lead will continue to provide access to training and support for employees and students.

We will continue to work through the mental health action plan creating a supportive environment for effective and sustainable practice and will continue to work with School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) and follow all advice and guidance from the organization.

Special Education

Students with special needs will receive the same levels of support in the Conventional Model for return as they would in a normal school year. Schools will implement the following measures to ensure the health and safety of students with special needs:

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- Any support person providing support to students who need intensive support will be provided with necessary additional PPE
- Social distancing, to the greatest extent possible, will be practiced in self-contained special education rooms
- Paraprofessionals visits will be limited, but those that are necessary via face to face will follow all screening protocols and health and safety guidelines. All other visits will be encouraged through virtual means
- Students with special education needs are provided specialized furniture, equipment, devices and materials that are essential for them to access learning.
 - > Regular cleaning of furniture, equipment and assistive devices will occur - including but not limited to bikes, laptops, iPads, sound field system mics, etc.
 - > Cleaning products used will be safe for students who may put items or hands in their mouths
 - > Snoozelen rooms and other alternative spaces will be cleaned after each individual use
 - > Ball pits will be closed
 - > Wheelchairs require cleaning when coming between home and school.
 - > Bikes will not be shared

Remote Learning

Students who choose not to attend school in-person will be placed on the Remote Learning roll. Remote learning during the emergency school closure period from March to June was put together quickly, and we learned many lessons from students, staff and parents. The remote learning program for 2020-2021 will look different than the emergency learning students experienced in the Spring.

Elementary

Daily Schedule

- Attendance will be taken daily
- 300 minutes of instruction (combination of synchronous and asynchronous)
- Digital platforms will be SeeSaw and Microsoft Teams
- Large group, small group and individual instruction
- Instruction provided by more than one teacher, and the student may or may not be “attached” to their home school

Teaching and Learning

- Full breadth of curriculum offered
- Focus will be on overall expectations
- Assessment and evaluation of skills and knowledge in all curricular areas
- Independent study through project-based or inquiry-based learning where possible
- Specific expectations in terms of synchronous learning, check-ins and small-group learning will be developed by division

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Secondary

Daily Schedule

- Students will be timetabled in two classes per quadmester, one in the morning and one in the afternoon
- 150 minutes of instruction per course, per day (combination of synchronous and asynchronous)
- Any synchronous learning will take place during the designated timetabled course (either the morning or the afternoon)
- Digital platforms will be Edsby, Brightspace and Microsoft Teams
- Large group, small group and individual instruction
- Students will have two teachers per quadmester and will remain attached to their home secondary school

Teaching and Learning

- Students will remain in their course selections as much as possible depending on availability of specialized teachers
- Focus will be on overall expectations
- Assessment and evaluation of skills and knowledge throughout the course, which will include a variety of final assessment tasks that could include exams
- Independent study through project-based or inquiry-based learning where possible

As was the case in during the emergency closure period, students engaging in remote learning will be supported by Lakehead Public Schools with respect to devices and connectivity.

Transportation

In the Conventional Model for return, transportation routes will run as normal as per STSTB policies, with enhanced protocols in place for health and safety:

- Students in grades 4-12 will be required to wear masks
- Students should be assigned seats and record of seating plan kept
- Siblings will sit together in seat assignments
- PPE for drivers
- Disinfection of buses at least twice daily
- Windows open as much as possible
- Training for drivers provided

Families will be required to indicate their need for busing when they complete the Confirmation of In-School Attendance and Transportation form.

Communication

Clear, open and transparent communication is key to a smooth transition back to school. We will be communicating with families in the following ways:

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- Regular updates posted to our website: <https://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/coronavirus-information/>
- Regular updates posted on our social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Messaging in local media outlets
- Direct communication to families through the School Messenger platform. These include automated calls, emails and SMS messages.
- Direct communication from the school and classroom teachers

A virtual Town Hall session will be held on August 11 to communicate more details of the plan and answer parent questions. The session will run from 5 to 6 PM, and a link to the session will be posted on Lakehead Public Schools' website and social media channels.

The Role of Families

A smooth transition back to school can only happen with extensive cooperation between Lakehead Public Schools and the families of the students we serve. Parents and guardians play an important role and we look to you for support and cooperation.

1. Make an informed decision – the information contained in this plan presents a clear picture of what school will look like in September, but parents know their children best. **Families must choose to have their children attend school in-person, or learn remotely, by August 14, 2020.** Should you choose the remote learning option, in-person attendance can only happen at selected entry points later in the school year.
2. If your child is returning to school, screen them for symptoms daily, and don't send them to school if they are sick or show symptoms, or if they have had contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19.
3. Teach them to wear masks properly, and proper respiratory etiquette when it comes to sneezing and coughing.
4. Follow drop-off, pickup and visiting protocols that your school establishes to help reduce the risk of spread of infection.
5. Stay informed – check Lakehead Public Schools' website and social media channels often as information is frequently updated. Principals will be a good resource for information and you are encouraged to monitor school social media channels as well.