

## **Can I find out if my child's teacher is vaccinated?**

No, however the Ontario government announced on Aug. 17, 2021 that a vaccination disclosure policy for school board staff will be in place for September 2021. This vaccine disclosure policy applies only to staff, it does not include students.

## **What is the process that will be followed by schools if a child is symptomatic or there is a confirmed case in the school?**

Lakehead Public Schools will follow the guidance in the [Management of COVID-19 in schools](#) document provided by the Ministry of Education and the direction of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

## **How will I know if there is a COVID-19 case in my child's classroom or in other classrooms?**

If there is a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (or suspected case) in your child's classroom, Public Health will determine if the person with the confirmed case was in the building during their period of communicability and engage in contact tracing processes (including contacting families as required). Parents/guardians in the class will receive an email from the school Principal with an accompanying letter from Thunder Bay District Health Unit with instructions for next steps if there is a high risk determination by Public Health. COVID-19 cases in all schools will be posted on the Lakehead Public Schools COVID-19 Information and Updates on the [Lakehead Public Schools website](#). Parents/guardians should check the COVID-19 Information and Updates for the most up to date information for their child's school. Beginning September 2021, Lakehead Public Schools will no longer notify parents/guardians via email of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in their child's school.

## **How will teachers handle the possible negative impact/reaction from classmates toward students who are not vaccinated?**

Teachers are trained in bullying prevention strategies to ensure all students are provided a welcome and supportive learning environment. If you have concerns, please speak with your child's teacher directly.

## **What will the elementary learning model look like (Kindergarten - Grade 8)**

### **In-Person Learning Model**

- Students learn in person following the regular school hours and schedule at their home school
- When possible, and in accordance with Ministry guidance, students learning in person will be able to participate in school clubs and teams

### **Remote Learning Model**

- Students will learn fully online
- School start and end times will be confirmed before the start of school
- Remote learning will be taught by staff who may not be from your home school
- Students from multiple schools may be assigned to the same remote learning class
- Students will be required to participate online using technology in real-time during the school day
- The process to register for the Remote Learning Model has passed. Please contact your school if you have questions

## **What will the secondary learning model look like (Grade 9-12)?**

All Lakehead Public Schools schools will follow a Modified Semester Model in September 2021. Students will take two courses per day. However, in this Modified Semester Model, students will take a total of four (4) courses over the 20 week semester. Students will alternate by taking two (2) courses for one week, then two other courses for the next week. Students will attend school 150 minutes each morning followed by 150 minutes each afternoon.

This model will be followed by students whether they are attending school in-person or remotely. It has been approved by the Ministry of Education after consultation with Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Note: students will not be able to switch between remote learning and in-person learning until the end of the first semester in February 2022, and, provided timetables can be matched.

## In-Person Learning Model

- Students attend in person for the full day, five days per week, following the regular start and end times at their home school
- When possible, and in accordance with Ministry guidance, students learning in person will be able to participate in school clubs and teams

## Remote Learning Model

- Students will learn fully online
- The following specialized optional programs will not be offered virtually: International Baccalaureate, French Immersion and Advanced Placement
- The process to register for the Remote Learning Model has passed. Please contact your school if you have questions

## Can families switch learning models during the school year?

Elementary (Kindergarten - Grade 8): An opportunity to switch learning models will be provided for elementary students in January 2022.

Secondary (Grade 9-12): Students with compelling reasons to switch learning models at the end of the first Modified Semester (beginning of February) may be considered if timetables can be matched.

In situations with exceptional circumstances, families may switch learning models if space is available. Please contact your school Principal.

## Will students with special education needs be supported in the Remote Learning Model?

Our experience this year has shown that in-person learning is the best format to support students with special education needs, particularly those in self-contained classes and alternative education programs.

Students with special education needs will continue to be supported with the necessary accommodations, modifications, placements and programs provided in their Individual Education Plan (IEP), whether in in-person or remote learning.

## What mental health and well-being support is available to students?

- Mental health and well-being information and resources for both parents/guardians and students are available on the Lakehead Public Schools Mental Health resources webpage
- Staff are pulling together activities for building community
- PA Days in September will focus on student mental health & well-being
- Tools and strategies for identifying students who are struggling and in need of support will be in place
- Lakehead Public Schools will conduct an awareness campaign to make students and families aware of the support available
- There will be increased monitoring and supporting of students during the school year. In an effort to reduce barriers and stigma, the self-referral process will continue
- Staff learning and the use of data will help us tailor our support

## Will Lakehead Public Schools supply technology to students enrolled in remote learning?

Students in remote learning will require a stable internet connection and technology with audio and video capabilities. Students who do not have access to their own device will be provided with one. This will be supplied by their home school and must be returned when remote learning ends.

**If I register my child in Remote Learning in September but I decide to switch to in-person learning at the designated 'switch' time, will my child be enrolled back in their home school?**

Yes.

**Why has Lakehead Public Schools opted for a Modified Semester Model for secondary school (Grade 9-12) in the 2021-2022 school year?**

We believe the Modified Semester Model will be more supportive of student learning as it addresses student concerns about the pace and intensity of courses experienced this past school year in the Quadmester Model. This model will be followed by students whether they are attending school in person or remotely. It has been approved by the Ministry of Education after consultation with Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

**Why can't secondary schools return to the traditional semester structure with four courses every day?**

We too would like to start the year with a traditional (pre-pandemic) semester model. As a Board, however, we have been directed by the Ministry of Education to limit the school day to two courses to reduce the daily contact between individuals and help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The direction to return to full-day (300 minutes) in-person learning for secondary students means that these two classes must be 150 minutes each.

**Will the Modified Semester Model be changed if COVID-19/public health conditions improve?**

Yes, we are following the Modified Semester Model because we are hopeful that a return to regular semesters can occur with improved health conditions. As the public health conditions improve, this model provides additional flexibility with a return to a regular (pre-pandemic) semester model. Should there be the ability to move to four courses in a day (regular semester), this can be done very quickly rather than waiting for the end of Quadmester 2 (in February 2022), if the Quadmester Model was followed again. Each period would then be 75 minutes as in a regular semester.

**Will the workload for students be heavier with the Modified Semester Model?**

The Modified Semester Model is intended to spread the four-course workload over a whole semester and we believe it is a better model for continuity of learning. The amount of learning and pace will be more aligned with a regular semester. We also recognize the alternate week approach does come with its challenges, however, the intent is to focus on the two courses only for the courses for the week.

We will provide parameters on student workload to our students, staff and families to ensure homework and assignments are balanced from one week to the next.

We recognize there is no one model that works best for all students but feel this model addresses the concerns raised by students and families about the previous Quadmester model, and allows schools to quickly pivot to a regular semester when we are permitted to do so.

**Why was the Modified Semester Model developed?**

The development of the Modified Semester Model was in response to both student and staff feedback on the Quadmester experience in the 2020-2021 school year and to provide a secondary model that adheres to current requirements set up by Public Health and the Government of Ontario.

The Modified Semester Model provides:

- A better balance of course loads for students with four classes at once (e.g., compulsory and elective courses)

# Frequently Asked Questions

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- Reduction of time and learning loss between successive courses. For example a student has Math in Quad 1 in one year and Quad 4 the following year has a large gap between courses. The modified semester model reduces this
- There is less impact per course for students who are absent due to illness in a 10-week vs. 20-week course (absences balanced more equally across all courses) with this model
- Students benefit from official midterm marks and all marks being submitted to College and University application centres for early admissions, scholarships, etc.
- For student achievement and well-being reasons, students with purposeful timetables (e.g., spares, General Learning Strategies courses, resource periods, etc.), benefit with having one of these periods to support a full course load (e.g., 4 courses in a semester)

## **Will the Modified Semester Model be the timetable model for secondary schools after the pandemic is over?**

No. We will move back to a traditional semester model for our secondary schools as soon as we are able, in accordance with Public Health and the Government of Ontario direction.