

**Welcome Back!**

Our staff extends a warm welcome back to our school community. We are so happy to see you all! We hope that everyone enjoyed a healthy and relaxing summer! Thank you to Mr. Mahoney and Ms. Visnosky and their caretaking team for making our school spic and span for our first day back! Thank you to Ms. Rees- Nelles and Mrs. Janzen for all of their efforts helping staff and students get ready for our new school year!

We know that the school year is beginning differently this year but our goal for the first few weeks will be to make our students feel comfortable coming back to school after being away for over 5 months. We will focus on safety and well being as well as establishing routines in the classroom, procedures to maintain safety and expectations of student behaviour.

**NEW RETURN TO SCHOOL PROTOCOLS**

This year the return to school will look very different for our students and staff. We will have fewer students in our classes as some will be learning online. We are required to follow certain pathways in our hallways and our classrooms will be set up differently. Many of the changes that have been made are based on advice and protocols that have been communicated to us by the Niagara Regional Public Health Department as well as the Ministry of Education. Please take some time to read through this so you and your child(ren) will know what to expect when you return to school.

**STAGGERED START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR**

As announced by the DSBN, we will be having a staggered start to our school year.

There are many benefits of a staggered entry such as:

- ~Provide a calm environment to introduce our organized entry and dismissal procedures
- ~Allow students a gradual and thorough introduction to the enhanced health and safety guidelines within the school, and helping them learn new routines
- ~Allow staff to adapt their practices to meet the new safety standards with students

Students attending in School learning					
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	September 7	September 8	September 9	September 10	September 11
When does my child attend school?	Labour Day - No School	Kindergarten Grade 1	Kindergarten Grade 1 Grade 2 Grade 3	Kindergarten Grade 1 Grade 2 Grade 3 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6	Kindergarten Grade 1 Grade 2 Grade 3 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8
Designated Special Education classes will all return on Tuesday September 8					

**Please note:** Your child’s bus ride to school will not be affected during the staggered entry return. Students requiring transportation will have it on their start date. Parents do not need to notify NSTS.

Our goal is to return to school with safety, well-being and learning in mind. We appreciate your support and understanding as we work to achieve this goal.

**MASKS**

All students in grades 4-8 will be expected to wear a mask while they are in the classroom as well as in the hallways and washrooms. Students may take off their masks to eat as well as when they are outdoors for fitness/nutritional breaks. Please ensure your child has their mask when they arrive at school each day.

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are not required to wear a mask but may do so. Students are expected to provide their own mask.



## MORNING ENTRY PROCEDURES

**VERY IMPORTANT:** *In order for all of our students to arrive in a safe and distanced manner we ask that you carefully read the plans below as they pertain to your child.*

**Kindergarten:** Students will be greeted by a staff member who will direct them to their classroom community on the tarmac. Students will remain supervised, with their classroom community until the bell rings. Classroom teachers will greet their students on the tarmac for outdoor play.

### **Grades 1-8 Walking:**

All students who walk to school will be greeted by a staff member who will direct them to their classroom community on the field. Students will remain with their classroom community until the bell rings. Classroom teachers will walk their students into the school in a staggered manner. These community circles will also be their designated area for fitness breaks.

### **Students Who are Bussed:**

All students who take the bus to school will be greeted by a staff member who will direct them to their classroom community on the tarmac (kindergarten) or field (grades 1-8). Students will remain with their classroom community until the bell rings. Classroom teachers will walk their classes into the school.

## END OF DAY PROCEDURES:

**Kindergarten:** Students will be dismissed to a designated adult from the tarmac by their teachers at 3:10. We ask parents to wait, in a physically distanced manner, outside of the kindergarten gates for your child(ren).

**Grades 1-8 Walking:** Students will be dismissed by their teacher and will leave the building through their designated exit door. They are expected to go straight home and not loiter on the school grounds, as per Public Health guidelines. We ask parents to wait, in a physically distanced manner, at the appropriate exit door (primary=gate by parking lot, junior=junior door, intermediate=intermediate door)

**Students who are bussed:** Students will be dismissed by their teacher and will leave the building through their designated exit door. Grades 1 -3 students will be escorted by a staff member to the bus. Grades 4-8 students will walk around the building, directly to the bus. Students are expected to follow the NSTS and Public Health safety protocols for the entire duration of their bus ride.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** Parents/guardians will not be permitted onto the school property at entry or dismissal. We ask that you drop your child(ren) off at the parking lot gate to the field (grades 1-8) or at the gate entry to the tarmac (kindergarten) and promptly leave. As well, please wait for your child at dismissal, in a physically distanced manner, outside of their designated exit door at the end of the day. (see above). We thank you in advance for your understanding, patience and cooperation.

## BREAKFAST CLUB / LUNCH PROGRAM

We will begin to offer our Breakfast and Lunch program later in the year. It will be a grab and go service where prepackaged healthy snacks will be provided to our students.

## PARENTS / VISITORS ENTERING THE BUILDING

At this time the Public Health Department has mandated that parents and visitors not enter the school building.

## LATE ARRIVAL PROCESS

We know that there are some mornings that despite best efforts being made students occasionally arrive late. In the past, parents would walk students into the office to get an admit class slip. To ensure the health and safety of students, staff and parents, students who arrive late will buzz the office and wait for an admin assistant to let the student into the building. **Parents/guardians will not be permitted to enter the building with the student(s).** Please be aware that entry may take some time depending on the number of students who require entry. While waiting, please remember to always follow the COVID safety protocols. We appreciate your patience as we work through this new process.



**SORRY,  
NO  
VISITORS**



## LUNCH DROP OFF

We know that some parents like to drop student lunches off at the office before our nutritional breaks. We request that students arrive at school with their lunch and snacks. To limit contact with our staff we ask that parents/guardians not drop off lunches throughout the day.



## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Please see the Ferndale website ([ferndale.dsbm.org](http://ferndale.dsbm.org)) for a list of supplies, per division, that you may choose to provide for your child(ren). Please know that the school will ensure that every child has all of the necessary materials and no one will go without.

For school, students will need:

Please send all supplies in a labelled pencil case or ziplock bag. They will not be shared with other students.



## COMMUNICATION

Due to COVID-19 and our desire to not share items, student agendas will not be used this year. Each classroom teacher will be indicating how they will prefer to communicate with parents either through a newsletter, email, or phone call.



## TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY BOOK RETURNS

A number of our students borrowed ChromeBooks and library books when schools unexpectedly closed in March. There is a designated table in the front foyer for the return of the ChromeBooks and a bin for library books. If a parent is returning the items please come to the front door and let our admin assistants know you are returning borrowed items.



## WATER FOUNTAINS

For the health and safety of our students all water fountains in our school will be closed. The water bottle filling part of the fountain will be available to our students. Please send a refillable water bottle with your child to school so they have water to drink throughout the day. This is especially important as we will be encouraging our staff to take their classes outdoors several times a day while we have great weather.

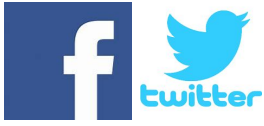
## LOCKERS/COAT HOOKS

Students will not be accessing lockers or coat hooks this year, as per Public Health protocols. They will keep all of their belongings in their backpacks at their desks.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### BELL TIMES

8:35	Supervision begins
8:50	Entry bell
9:10	Period 1
9:50	Period 2
10:30	Period 3
11:10	Period 4
11:50	Period 5
12:30	Period 6
1:10	Period 7
1:50	Period 8
2:30	Period 9
3:10	Dismissal



### WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

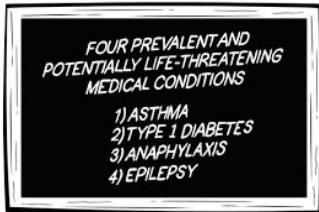
Our school website, [ferndale.dsbm.org](http://ferndale.dsbm.org), will answer most of your frequently asked questions Here you will also find our TWITTER feed.



### COLLECTION OF FUNDS & PERMISSION FORMS

School Cash Online enables you to use your debit or credit card to make quick and easy payments. We also use School Cash Online to obtain permission for school events. To access the system, click on the “School Cash” button on our school website. **PLEASE NOTE: The usual Welcome Back to School package that contains important forms to complete including a Student Verification Form along with Board forms that must be completed by all families will be completed through School Cash Online this year. We will email you when the forms will be sent to you through School Cash Online.**

**\*\*Please have all forms completed and returned to the office no later than September 21st.\*\***



### PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If you have a child with a prevalent medical condition (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy or others) we want to make sure we have a current Plan of Care to support your child.

All parents of children with prevalent medical conditions are asked to fill out the Plan of Care and submit to the school. You can download the forms at [dsbn.org/prevalent-medical-conditions](http://dsbn.org/prevalent-medical-conditions) For more information, please contact the school



### CONCUSSIONS

The DSBM has a concussion policy and procedures to support proper prevention, identification, management, and return to learn strategies. The DSBM engages in concussion education in a variety of ways, including recognizing Rowan’s Law Day commemorated on the last Wednesday in September to raise awareness about concussions. If your child has sustained a suspected or actual concussion while not at school, please contact the school.



### MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Mental health and well-being is an important factor in student success. Learning to form healthy relationships, maintain physical health, academic engagement, and educational achievement are all impacted by mental health and well-being. Students mental health and well-being is supported in a variety of ways:

- Helping students feel safe and included
- Instilling a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Working with them to feel confident in their identity

To learn more visit: <https://www.dsbm.org/well-being/home>



### MONTHLY NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Our monthly newsletter and calendar will be published monthly and posted on our website. We will send home one paper copy per family. Many classroom teachers also provide a monthly newsletter at the beginning of each month to share classroom news.



## TRANSPORTATION

We strongly encourage all students to get into their routine right from the first day of school.

In August, Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) posted specific back to school transportation arrangements for each student enrolled at the school.

Please visit [www.nsts.ca](http://www.nsts.ca) and sign-in to the secure parent portal to get your child's student transportation information. To sign-in to the portal you will need your child's Ontario Education Number (OEN) which can be found on their report card

**Changes to home, pick-up and/or drop-off addresses must be made through your child's school.** Please contact your school or NSTS if you have questions regarding your child's transportation.



## REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

Whether it's an illness, a medical appointment or other important event, there are times when students may need to be away from school.

The District School Board of Niagara is introducing a new method for parents to report their child(ren)'s absences.

Using the Safe Arrival system, parents will be able to report daily absences, and even schedule absences in one of three ways:



Call toll-free before bell time:

**1-866-606-5567**



Logging on to the web portal by **clicking here**. Using this website, you can set up your account to report and schedule absences.

LOGIN



Using your smart phone or tablet. Simply download the SchoolMessenger app. The app is compatible with both Apple and Android devices.

IPHONE

ANDROID

