



CAMPUS RE-OPENING  
SEPTEMBER 2020

**OPERATIONAL READINESS PLAN**

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**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**

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*UPDATED: AUGUST 17, 2020*



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Our number one priority is to ensure the health and wellness of our community. At the forefront of our recommendations and our operational plan are the following principles:

### **Maximize Health and Wellbeing**

The success of the community-based measures taken to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and “flattening the curve” is why we are able to return to campus in September. The national lockdown, school closures, stay-at-home orders and self-isolation requirements have unintended mental health impacts on individuals and families and an important step in reducing the stress for students, family and our staff and faculty will be the return to a more normal school experience and schedule.

### **Minimize Individual and Public Health Risks**

Provincial and local public health and government authorities have outlined– and will continue to refine– guidance and directives for protocols and processes to minimize the spread of infection based on the latest research and information. As a school community, we will meet and endeavour to exceed the public health standard, understanding that our community’s confidence and trust are essential to the support of our plan and a healthy and successful academic year.

### **Provide a Continuity of Education and Support**

Our plan will include measures to enable us to provide a continuity of education to students and families on campus and at home should public health or individual student and family circumstances require it. We will continue to support the social and emotional health of the entire community and build on some of the initiatives implemented during the school closure.

## ELMWOOD RETURN TO SCHOOL

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With the safeguarding and support of our community as our top priority, students will be in class in September, learning through conventional delivery with school every weekday, with class sizes that reflect current regulations, regular social interaction and modified co-curricular activities. However, it is critical to balance the risk of direct infection and transmission of COVID-19 in children and adults with the impact of school closures on their physical and mental health.

Current evidence and experience support the concept that children can return to school in a carefully structured manner that protects their health and minimizes risks from a public health perspective. Relationships between the school and the Ottawa public health unit will be crucial to navigate the complex and evolving COVID-19 environment, planning and reopening schools, and addressing other child health issues that emerge. Elmwood will consult the Ministry’s “Approach to Reopening Schools for the 2020-21 School Year” and the CIS ONTARIO Guidelines for “Reopening Independent Schools for the 2020-2021 school year” for guidelines and best practices.

The operations outlined in this document are based on the most recent advice from Public Health officials. The information in this plan is subject to change at any time based on the guidance provided by the Ministry of Education and Ottawa Public Health.

This document is intended as an executive summary of the complete Operational Plan that can be found [here](#).



## SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND TIMETABLING

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- 5-day return with health and safety precautions in place
- Modified school day routine based on smaller class sizes, cohorting, blended learning and staggered starts
- At-home Learning with enhanced remote delivery for students unable to come to campus
- Students are only required to wear summer uniforms or gym uniforms. No school blazers or other dry cleaning products are expected to be worn

### STRATEGIES:

- Cohorting and class size: Keeping students in a defined cohort and reducing the number of interactions with peers and teachers limits the opportunity for the spread of infection and allows for more efficient and effective isolation strategies in the event of an infection. Classes will be organized into cohorts of approximately 15 students. These cohorts will spend their days together- in the classroom and at recess/ break and lunchtime.
- Limiting movement throughout the school: While outdoor time will be prioritized, movement throughout the school will be limited. Cohorts, for the most part, will remain in their classrooms with teachers coming to them. Trips to the lunchroom, washrooms and outdoors will be coordinated and staggered to limit interaction with other cohorts.
- Timetabling Junior School: The Junior School timetable remains essentially the same with a staggered start and dismissal, the details of which will be communicated in the days before school. Before and After Care: Before (from 7:30 am) and after school care (until 5:45 pm) will be provided for students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5.
- Timetabling Middle and Senior School: Students in the Middle School will be in cohorted in classes of 15 and will follow a regular timetable with scheduled breaks for recess and lunch. They will stay in one physical space and teachers will come to their rooms to deliver learning. Students in Senior School will also be in a homeroom pod of 15 students and follow a typical timetable. However, due to option subjects being different for all students they will move to some different spaces throughout the day to join their option subject class. All rooms will be cleaned prior to entry and also upon exit. As per the guidance from the Ministry of Education and Ottawa Public Health the students will experience significantly less than the recommended 100 contacts for the entire time we are following this plan.
- At-Home Learning: Students unable to return to campus will be supported through At-Home Learning. Building on our Spring program's success, the At-Home Learning experience will be enhanced through the addition of augmented technology that will allow students learning remotely to be engaged in the on-campus classroom experience.
- Music and Phys Ed: The music curriculum will be modified in accordance with public health guidelines. Initially, there will be no wind instruments or choir and the focus will be more on music theory. Phys Ed will also take into account public health directives. As much as possible, instruction will be outside and physically distancing restrictions emphasized.
- Camp Elmwood will be postponed to later in the spring or until such a time when we can safely have the girls attend.



## ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND BUILDING PREPARATION

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### HIGHLIGHTS:

- The transmission of infection will be mitigated with a layered approach where many proactive actions will reduce the risk of the spread of infection. These include:
  - » Cleaning and disinfection
  - » Personal protective equipment, protective barriers and isolation
  - » Physical distancing

### STRATEGIES:

- Enhanced and continuous daily cleaning: Continuation of enhanced daily school-wide cleaning protocols using asthma safe, hospital-grade cleaning products, green and scent-free where available. Cleaning of high contact areas, including desks, tables, railing, door handles, will occur throughout the day and between rotations of students.
- Personal protective equipment: Students from Grade 4-12 will be required to wear non-medical face masks; students from Early Years to Grade 3 are encouraged to do the same. Teachers will wear medical face masks.
- Protective barriers: Plexiglass barriers have been installed in the reception areas in both the Junior and Middle and Senior School and in the Bistro and Junior School lunchroom. Portable plexiglass barriers will also be available in classrooms
- Classroom setups: Desk placement for each cohort will afford proper social distance between students. All collaborative spaces have been converted to teaching spaces. The use of the outdoors, for teaching and for breaks and recess, will be maximized.
- Signage and markings: Throughout the school, signage will educate and reinforce proper personal hygiene. Markings in traffic areas will designate flow and indicate a 2-metre distance.
- Isolation room: Each school will have a designated, properly equipped isolation room to which access will be restricted.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY PREPARATION

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### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Public health education to codify proper health hygiene practices and normalize the modifying of behaviours that will reduce the spread of infection.
- Public health approved protocols established to allow for efficient and effective identification, isolation and contact tracing of any affected individuals.
- Mental health support in place for all community members to ease the stress and anxiety of returning to campus.
- School safety measures in place to limit the number of people on campus and cohort interaction.
- School services modified to mitigate health risks.

### STRATEGIES:

- Public health education: Multi-channel and multiple touchpoint campaign to communicate key health education messages and manage expectations prior to and in the early days of the campus re-opening. This effort will be on-going.
- Screening and self-assessment: All community members are encouraged to be aware of COVID-19 symptoms and undertake daily self-assessment. Anyone exhibiting symptoms must stay home and seek testing.
- Thermal scanning: Thermal scanning will be available in each school. Any student with a temperature equal to or over 37.8 degrees Celsius will be required to go home and will be isolated until they can be picked up. Students should not return to campus until they are 24 hours symptom-free or receive a negative COVID-19 diagnosis.
- Testing and contact tracing: A protocol has been developed to quickly and efficiently provide Ottawa Public Health with the information they need for effective contact tracing and notification. All members of the community are encouraged to download Health Canada's COVID Alert app.
- School Safety: Visitors, volunteers and parents will not be allowed on campus. Field trips, experiential education and community-building events will be held virtually where appropriate. Fire drills will continue but lockdown drills will be suspended.
- Personal belongings: Students will not have access to lockers for the start of the year and are required to keep their belongings with them during the day and take them home each evening.
- School Services: Students and staff will have the option to be on a full meal plan with the Bistro. "Grab and go" and à la carte items will not be available. Bistro items will be picked up in the lunchroom on a staggered schedule by cohort. The Uniform Shop will be closed with all uniform orders submitted online. Transportation to and from school will adhere to public health guidelines.



## COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND COMMUNICATION

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Foster an environment of confidence, compassion, flexibility and transparency
- Communicate early and often
- Support the “whole girl”
- Continuously improve our plan by seeking input, assessing impact and improving outcomes

### STRATEGIES:

- Student preparedness: Every effort will be made to support the “whole girl” in our return to school—academically, socially, emotionally and physically— despite the restrictions required. Daily physical activity will be emphasized, and athletics, arts, music and co-curricular activities will be reimagined to mitigate risk while still enhancing the overall student experience. Specific plans and details will be communicated in the early weeks of the year.
- Communications: Multiple communications and virtual events will be deployed and scheduled prior to the start of school. These virtual events will continue and an e-newsletter will provide school-wide updates on a weekly basis.
- Staff preparedness: Understand each staff and faculty member’s unique situation and provide individual support or school-based solutions where required. Ensure staff members are supported in fostering the social-emotional learning that will assist all students with coping skills. Proactively communicate plans and expectations. Junior School staff members will not visit the Middle-Senior School building and visa-versa.

### WHEN TO STAY HOME:

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 please stay home. Symptoms can vary from person to person and may also vary in different age groups. Some of the more commonly reported symptoms include:

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| • new or worsening cough                      | • muscle or body aches  |
| • shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | • new loss of smell or taste  |
| • temperature equal to or over 37.8°C         | • headache  |
| • feeling feverish                            | • gastrointestinal symptoms<br>(abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting) |
| • chills                                      | • feeling very unwell   |
| • fatigue or weakness                         |   |

If you have symptoms or are worried you have been exposed to COVID-19, please complete the Province of Ontario’s COVID-19 Self Assessment: [covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment)



## PROVIDING A CONTINUITY OF SUPPORT

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Staff and faculty will continue to be focused on supporting the “whole girl”- academically, socially and emotionally. Led by our Director of Health, Safety and Wellness, they will receive enhanced training to recognize the signs of stress and anxiety. As always, this support will be extended to the families as well.

## SIGNS YOUR DAUGHTER MAY NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

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These signs—and their frequency and intensity—may indicate your daughter needs additional support to manage her feelings.

*Changes in sleep patterns.*

*Changes in eating patterns.*

*Increased aches and pains.*

*Increased focus on their body and looking for evidence of illness.*

*Changes in mood and behavior.*

*Increased difficulty separating.*

*Withdrawal/isolation.*

*Difficulty concentrating.*

*Increased worries/inability to focus.*

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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If you have any questions or need support, please feel free to contact any of the following:

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