



September 18, 2020

Dear SHS Families,

What a fantastic start to the school year! The boys' joy and excitement returning to school and connecting with each other has been wonderful to experience firsthand. We could not be prouder of our boys for adopting and adapting to the new daily health and safety routines. We will continue to practice these very important health and safety measures until they become regular habits akin to muscle memory.

A big thank you to all our families for partnering with us to reinforce these routines at home, and by demonstrating your daily commitment by completing screenings, adhering to mask protocols and reducing your families exposure while off campus. We are all in this together and we are grateful for the care you have shown to keep our entire community safe.

We also recognize that there are rising numbers of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ontario. While we feel confident with the health and safety protocols we have put in place at school, we recognize that there is always a chance COVID-19 may be contracted by a member of our community. As such, we wanted to clarify the steps that will be taken as well as the process for communicating with you in the event that this transpires.

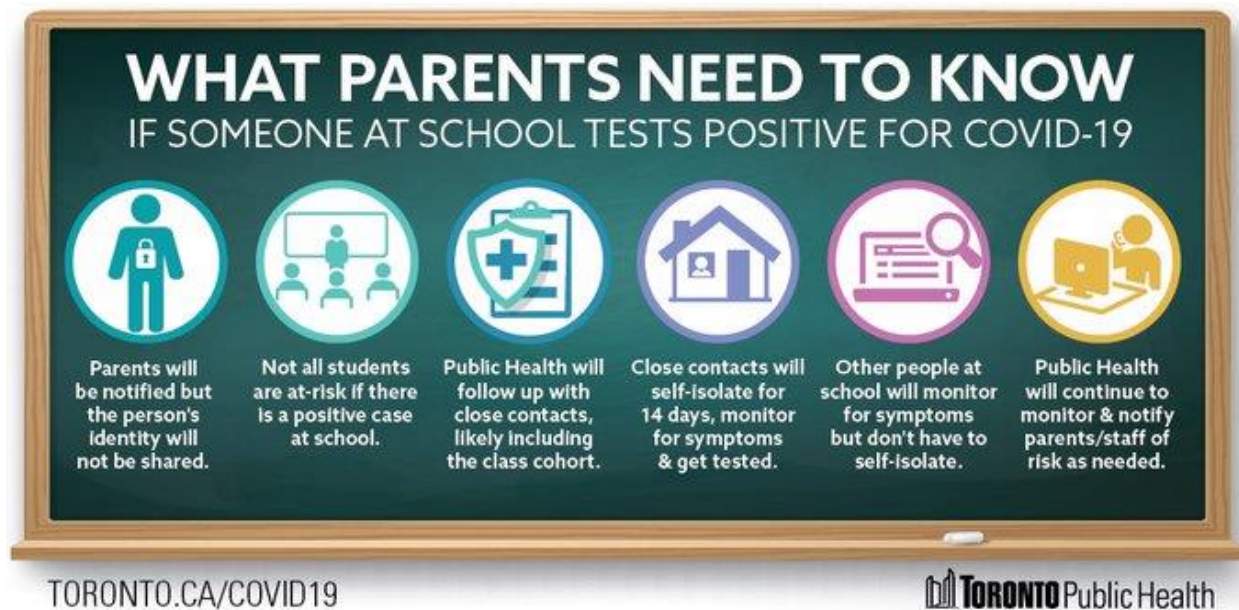
**To reiterate, we have not and do not currently have an active COVID-19 case in the SHS community but wanted to be proactive in explaining the process should this occur.**

Firstly, it is important to note that the authority for tracking, tracing and communicating actions related to mitigating the community spread of COVID-19 lies with Toronto Public Health (TPH) - not The Sterling Hall School. As such, we share information with TPH and they provide instructions to both the school and to SHS families directly. The TPH contact tracer team acts to quickly and efficiently isolate individuals or groups who may have been exposed, at the levels outlined in their criteria, to limit potential impact on the wider community. Decisions to remove individuals or cohorts from school, or even to close the school in the event of an outbreak, falls to TPH - and we will comply with all directions by the Health authority.

As it relates to sharing specific information with our community, SHS has a legal obligation not to communicate directly with parents, students and faculty regarding personal health information, unless specifically authorized to do so by TPH. We will not be allowed to disclose the name, class or grade of any student or staff member who may have contracted the virus. These measures are in place to respect and protect individual and families' personal health information - and SHS will adhere to these expectations.

Given our close-knit community, as well as the prevalence of social media, it may be the case that impacted individuals choose to share information before SHS is permitted to do so. Please know that while official communication from SHS will come as quickly and transparently as regulations permit, it is reasonable to anticipate that our community may learn unofficial information prior to any official communication from the school. We thought it prudent to explain why this may occur, and ask for your patience and understanding as we comply with these guidelines.

We thought this infographic may help to explain the process:



Further information provided by Toronto Public Health in the event someone tests positive for COVID-19 in their child's school or class cohort: [TPH COVID-19 School Protocols](#).

If you or a member of your immediate family are contacted by Toronto Public Health (TPH) to be tested or self-isolate, please contact Jennifer Colleran, Vice-Principal at [jcolleran@sterlinghall.com](mailto:jcolleran@sterlinghall.com) and our Health Centre at [nurse@sterlinghall.com](mailto:nurse@sterlinghall.com) so that we can proactively develop a support plan to best meet the needs of your family. This would be done in the utmost confidence. In this situation, SHS already has a smooth transition plan in place to Sharks Online to maintain academic learning and connection for our students while at home.

Please click [HERE](#) to find information Toronto Public Health would like us to share with our community in advance of the upcoming high holidays and Thanksgiving regarding safer holiday planning during COVID-19.

Thank you for your continued and on-going efforts to create and maintain a safe and healthy school environment. We adore having your boys back with us and we are focussed on good habits to remain open through this pandemic. We look forward to launching co-curricular activities and “Anchor Days” next week, which are meant to anchor our boys to our community and each other through experiential learning opportunities together, outside.

Have a wonderful weekend and, as ever, thank you for your ongoing trust and support.

Sincerely,

Rick Parsons  
Principal