



October 9, 2020

Dear SHS Families,

I wrote to you last Friday to share that we have been following the transmission numbers of COVID-19 in the GTA and the legislated changes in response to the current situation. In light of the rise in community cases in Toronto and in an effort to maintain daily on-campus school operations in the safest and healthiest way, we have adapted our mitigation strategies to respond to the current local situation in two ways, **which will take effect on Tuesday, October 13, 2020:**

1. An update to our Sterling Safe screening form and adopting new government protocols for re-entry; and
2. The move to mandatory indoor mask-use in grades JK - Grade 3.

Sterling Safe Screening

Recently, Toronto Public Health (TPH) updated its COVID-19 school and child care screening guidance based on recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. The purpose of this screening change is to clarify the list of particular symptoms for daily screening and to provide different steps for parents and schools to follow based on the presentation of particular symptoms.

Based on this new guidance and after broad consultation, we have amended our daily Sterling Safe screening questions and responses to align with new recommendations. The SHS screening form will be automatically updated to reflect these changes beginning next week. We will continue to send a daily screening email reminder with the link to the screening form.

The revised screening guidance is intended to help parents make informed decisions about whether their son should attend school and when to seek further medical advice.

Screening Form Updates

The new updates to the screening form identify two sets of symptoms:

- ◆ The first symptom question asks about **fever, cough, difficulty breathing and/or loss of taste or smell.**



Required Parent Response

Students with any of these symptoms are advised to stay home, self-isolate and seek medical advice from their doctor.

- ◆ The second symptom question asks about symptoms that are commonly associated with other illnesses, specifically **sore throat/painful swallowing, stuffy/runny nose, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea or muscle aches/tired.**

Required Parent Response

Students with **ONLY ONE** of these symptoms should stay home and monitor symptoms. If the symptom improves and they are symptom-free without medication for 24 hours, they may return to school. If the symptom worsens, they should seek medical advice from their doctor.

Students with **TWO SYMPTOMS** should stay home, self-isolate and seek medical advice from their doctor.

As a reminder, if your son is absent please:

- ◆ Notify attendance@sterlinghall.com
- ◆ Continue to fill in your son's Sterling Safe screening form even when he is at home
- ◆ Please keep our Health Centre informed throughout the duration of an absence by email at nurse@sterlinghall.com

Mandatory Mask-Use JK – Grade 3

Mask-use for JK through Grade 3 has been strongly encouraged since the beginning of school. All SHS boys have been arriving with masks each day and the overwhelming majority have been wearing masks inside throughout the day. In light of the rising COVID-19 cases in Toronto, the onset of cold and flu season, the general compliance and successful mask-use already demonstrated, we are moving to mandatory indoor mask-use for all JK - Grade 3 students. It is already mandatory for boys from Grades 4-8.

We will be requiring mandatory mask-use while indoors or when unable to physically distance outdoors for all students JK – Grade 8 as of October 13, 2020.



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All students will continue to have mask breaks outside four times per day for 30 minutes. Boys will also be able to remove masks in order to eat lunch and stay hydrated throughout the day, while they are seated in class, with 2 metres of distance between themselves and others.

While your son's homeroom teacher will communicate this change and work with the boys on these mask protocols in JK- Grade 3, we ask families to take some time over the long weekend to ensure your sons' independence in wearing and caring for his masks. Instructional videos can be found [HERE](#) to assist.

Ensuring the health and safety of our students and community is a priority, especially during periods of increased community spread of COVID-19, and amid the onset of cold and flu season. One of the most important things you can do to keep our community safe is to help your son successfully wear a mask, screen your son daily for COVID-19 symptoms, keep him home when he is ill, and allow him the time to recover prior to returning to our community on campus.

I want to express my gratitude for your continued support and partnership as we navigate this challenging time together and I wish you all an enjoyable long weekend.

Sincerely,

Rick Parsons
Principal