

## **Message to Elementary Families RE January Changes**

December 21, 2020

### **Subject Line:** Changes to Elementary Schools in January

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Earlier today, the Ministry of Education announced that all in-person elementary schools will be closed to students for the first week of school after the holiday break, with elementary students now returning to in-person classes on Monday, January 11, 2021. Elementary students will be learning remotely during this period.

We know that the interruption to learning is a challenge for everyone, however, this step is being taken in accordance with the [Provincewide Shutdown](#) announcement to help stop the spread of COVID-19. We also recognize that this shutdown will have a detrimental impact on many families that we serve and our goal is to support your child through what may be an unsettling time.

Most Board staff including school administrators and educators are currently away for the annual two-week holiday break. As a result, schools will be holding virtual staff meetings on Monday, January 4 in the morning and you should expect to hear from schools on that day in the afternoon with more school-specific information for the week.

The same approach will also apply to DDSB@Home students to provide flexibility for families, understanding that some may have varying circumstances and we want to ensure schools can coordinate schedules to ensure that RealTime learning is available for students.

It is important for parents/guardians to consider any necessary arrangements that would need to be made to ensure that children have the appropriate supervision at home for the first week of January given that the Ministry of Education has confirmed that before and after school child care services will not be operational between January 4 and 8.

Families of students in self contained special education programs (Practical Learning Program, Developmental Program, and Structured Learning Programs-Alternative Curriculum) will be receiving a separate communication tomorrow regarding programming options for your child.

We hope that all families can enjoy the holiday break with members of their household and find some time for rest and relaxation, understanding how difficult this year has been on everyone in our community. Please continue to follow the [advice of the Government of Ontario](#) stay safe over the break. We look forward to communicating further with you in the new year and thank you in advance for your understanding during this unusual time.

Sincerely,  
Norah Marsh  
Director of Education