

August 18, 2020

Memorandum To: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education
School Authorities

From: Stephen Lecce
Minister

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Subject: School Reopening

Thank you for your partnership as we have continued our work together to support the safe reopening of our schools.

We have had a number of questions regarding secondary models and staggering the reopening of schools and wanted to provide as much information and clarity as possible.

As you finalize your reopening plans, school boards are required to meet the following requirements:

1. 300 minutes of instruction are delivered each day;
2. Indirect and direct student contacts are limited to approximately 100 students in the school; and
3. Secondary school students are in a maximum of two in-person class cohorts.

Secondary Models

Three core secondary models have emerged that meet the requirements, which boards may consider using (in addition to other models that meet the aforementioned requirements):

1. **Eight Semester or Single Course**
 1. Students take only one course for the entire day and it lasts for about 24 days.
 2. There are several variations to deliver preparation time.

2. **Quadmester or Two Courses**

1. Students take two courses for about 48 days.
2. Courses may rotate between remote and in-person if a remote class is necessary to maintain cohorting and contact requirements.

3. **Rotating Schedule or Four Courses**

1. Mirrors a traditional delivery model with four courses, but the first period is lengthened, and the other three classes are shorter and delivered remotely.
2. There is a cycle of 21 days or less rotating which course is in-person and which ones are remote.

In addition, small high schools which can establish timetables that treat a grade of students as a cohort can also meet the requirements.

To clarify, in the Guide to Reopening Ontario Schools, adapted delivery schedules require in person attendance for at least 50% of instructional days (e.g., alternating days). To maintain cohorting and contact limits, the instructional day may be a combination of in-person and synchronous learning.

Secondary schools in designated school boards will open on an adapted model, with class cohorts of approximately 15 students, attending on alternate schedules that would include in person attendance.

Under conventional or adapted models it is expected that:

1. In person learning is maximized to the fullest extent possible;
2. A study hall is provided for students who need or chose to stay at the school to participate in the synchronous learning portions of the day; and,
3. School boards review their models on an ongoing basis and commit to increase in person attendance when possible to do so.

If school boards would like to discuss their secondary models to confirm alignment with these requirements, boards are encouraged to contact the Assistant Deputy Minister they met with on their reopening plan as soon as possible.

Staggered Starts

In the August 14, 2020 memo, the ministry confirmed that school boards are permitted to adopt a staggered start to the first week of the school year, such as allowing different grades to return on different days, if boards feel that this would contribute to students learning new routines and for new health and safety practices to be reinforced.

Some boards have asked whether it would be possible to stagger reopening beyond the first week. Given that the ministry's foremost priority is the health and safety of students and staff in the reopening process, we are pleased to announce that boards can stagger their reopening over the first two weeks of school where this approach would enhance the health and safety preparedness. School boards should consult with their local public health and do not need to seek ministry approval or an adjustment to previously approved school calendars should they choose to adopt this approach.

If there are changes to the staggered reopening, we ask boards to clearly communicate this to their parent community.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on our next steps to reopening schools.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce
Minister

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

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