



February 7, 2022

Dear Director of Education:

RE: COVID-19 Protection Measures

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to keeping schools COVID-safe and open for in-person learning. In consideration of the evolving COVID-19 epidemiology and provincial guidance and regulations, I have assessed that there is no longer the need for enhanced COVID-19 protection measures for schools, as originally conveyed to you in my [November 26, 2021 letter](#), beyond those required by the Ontario government.

In response to key public health and health care indicators starting to show signs of improvement, the Government of Ontario eased [COVID-19](#) public health measures effective January 31, 2022 at 12:01 a.m., moving the province from Step 2 to protective measures as set out in [Ontario's Step 3 Rules, Ontario Regulation 364/20](#), issued under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#).

In comparison with the province, Public Health Sudbury & Districts is no longer experiencing marked differences in key COVID-19 metrics and trends. Our area, as with the rest of the province, is experiencing widespread circulation of the highly transmissible Omicron variant resulting in elevated hospitalization rates, outbreaks in high-risk settings, case and test positivity rates and, sadly, deaths. The protection provided by public health measures and high vaccination rates remains critically important.

On January 12, 2022, the government of Ontario announced the return of in-person learning for all publicly funded and private schools starting January 17, 2022, with enhanced health and safety measures in place. These measures supplement the existing [2021-22 school year health and safety measures](#) and build on measures announced in the December 30, 2021 Ministry of Education memo (e.g. daily symptom screening, availability of N95 masks for staff and 3-ply medical masks for students, additional HEPA and ventilation devices in schools, cohorting during recess and outdoor breaks and pausing on indoor high contact and high intensity extra-curricular activities).

As our local COVID-19 trends now compare with those of the province, and in alignment with broader provincial guidance and strengthened public health measures in schools, I have determined that our public health measures should also generally align with those in place across Ontario. We ask that you continue to reinforce and communicate the importance of protective measures to students, staff, and parents/guardians. Working

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phsd.ca



COVID-19 Protection Measures

February 7, 2022

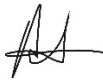
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together, I am confident we can reduce the burden of COVID-19 in area schools and continue to ensure safe and healthy school environments.

Thank you again for your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of students in area schools. Our priority remains keeping students, staff, and our communities safe. We will continue to monitor the local situation and adjust any recommendations accordingly.

If you or any member of the school community have any questions, please visit our Schools, child care centres and COVID-19 [webpage](#) and [FAQ](#), or contact Public Health Sudbury & Districts at 705.522.9200 (toll free 1.866.522.9200).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Sutcliffe', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer