



Viola Desmond Public School
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September 2, 2020

Dear VDPS Families,

We hope you are healthy, doing well, and had a restful summer. We look forward to welcoming our new and returning students and families. While we were connecting online, we missed our students and look forward to welcoming them back.

This letter contains important information about the return to school. Please review it. We also encourage families to visit www.yrdsb.ca/school-reopening for videos, frequently asked questions, important health and safety information and more about the school reopening. There is a translation tool on the website that will translate the content into over 100 languages.

School Return Dates

This year, we will be delaying students' return to school to give school staff time to prepare for your child's return. For the first few days of school, we will be welcoming students back in smaller groups to give them additional time to learn and practice our new health and safety measures, and to support their transition back to school after the school closures.

Typically, your homeroom classroom teacher placement is provided on the first day of school. This year, as we finalize the staffing process and timetables for students, we are working to provide you with your child's homeroom class placement before school begins. We will send you a follow up communication with this information as well as information about school routines e.g., arrival, recess, lunch and dismissal procedures.

Grades 1-8

GROUP A	GROUP B
Students with Last Names Beginning with A-L	Students with Last Names Beginning with M-Z

Students will return to school based on this calendar:

Monday September 7	Tuesday September 8	Wednesday September 9	Thursday September 10	Friday September 11
LABOUR DAY NO SCHOOL	STAFF ONLY	STAFF ONLY	Gr. 1-8 Group A (Last names A-L) All SK (Year 2) Students All Community Class Students	Gr. 1-8 Group B (Last names M-Z) All SK (Year 2) Students All Community Class Students
Monday September 14	Tuesday September 15	Wednesday September 16	Thursday September 17	Friday September 18
Gr. 1-8 Group A (Last names A-L) All SK Students JK Students Group A (Last names A-L) All Community Class Students	Gr. 1-8 Group B (Last names M-Z) All SK Students JK Students Group B (Last names M-Z) All Community Class Students	Gr. 1-8 All Students All SK Students JK Students Group A (Last names A-L) All Community Class Students	Gr. 1-8 All Students All SK Students JK Students Group B (Last names M-Z) All Community Class Students	All students attend all day.

*For those students attending Virtual Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 8 begins on Thursday, September 10.

Health and Safety

We ask families to remember that, as a result of health and safety guidelines:

- On a daily basis, parents/guardians of students under 18 and students over 18 are responsible to review and adhere to the [checklist from York Region Public Health](#). Any student experiencing COVID-19 symptoms **is required** to remain home.
- Where possible, students must maintain a physical distance at all times, as they enter, move through and exit the building.
- Students in Grades 4 to 12 will wear face non-medical masks while in school. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are strongly encouraged to wear masks while in school.
Please send your child to school with a mask.
- Until further notice, visitor(s) are not to enter the school during hours of operation unless identified through a prearranged exception.

- We are doing what we can to minimize class sizes. Students will remain with their class throughout the day, including for lunch and recess.
- Floor decals and classroom set-up are designed to minimize close contact.
- Hand sanitizers will be placed at the entrance to the school and in all classrooms and students will wash or sanitize their hands throughout the day, including when entering or leaving the classroom, before and after eating, after using the washroom and after touching shared objects

Supporting Transitions

We also want to assure you that our caring, skilled and professional staff members are well prepared to support student learning and well-being in this transition back to school. We know that the closures affected families differently, and that some students may not have been able to access learning as regularly, or experienced disruptions in their routines. We will work with you and your child to support your child's mental health, well-being and academics during this transition back to school and to our new school routines.

If you have any specific concerns about your child's well-being or transition back to school, please contact the school.

We have a dedicated staff with a strong commitment to student well-being and achievement, and to promoting positive, inclusive and supportive relationships with students, families, staff and community members. We are committed to providing a learning environment where everyone feels safe, welcome and respected.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child back to school.

Heather Schreider

Principal

Tamar Swerling

Vice-Principal