

(Add date)

Subject: COVID-19 outbreak declared at (enter school name)

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

This letter is to inform you that Ottawa Public Health (OPH) has declared an outbreak of COVID-19 at **(enter school name)**

As per provincial Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education [guidance](#), an outbreak is declared in a school once it has been determined that two individuals have tested positive with an epidemiological link (e.g. these children/staff could have become infected with COVID-19 at school, either from each other or a common source). OPH staff have been onsite to assess the situation. Based on what is known about the transmission risk in this school at the current time, the following outbreak measures are being reviewed and strengthened.

Strengthening Existing Infection Prevention and Control

- Reviewing and confirming important practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19 including:
 - Screening children and staff
 - Staying home when sick
 - Cohorting (grouping and separation of) students and staff
 - Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
 - Using personal protective equipment when appropriate (e.g., masking, eye protection)
 - Ensuring proper hand hygiene
 - Posting signage of appropriate public health measures (e.g., hand hygiene, coughing and sneezing etiquette)
 - Maintaining physical distancing

Additional Outbreak Measures

- ***[insert list based on unique circumstances such as classes or zones to remain at home; restrictions on school visitors, student activities, or staff movement between cohorts or schools; may even include information on classes/cohorts that are at home with instructions]***

Working with the school, OPH will continue to monitor the situation and outbreak measures may be scaled up or down in response to the risk of transmission in the school and the assessment of outbreak measures that have been implemented. OPH will continue to provide updates on the situation including any changes in outbreak recommendations. OPH will determine when operations can safely resume, if a classroom or portion of a school was closed.

OPH will inform particular students and staff if it is recommended they be tested for COVID-19. If you **have not** been contacted directly by someone at OPH, you do not need to have your child tested unless he or she is showing symptoms associated with COVID-19. OPH recommends that all students/staff who attend a school that is currently in an outbreak situation should self-monitor closely for symptoms of COVID-19 and, if symptoms develop, visit a [COVID-19 Assessment Center, Care Clinic, or Drive Thru](#), run by our local hospital partners. (Please note that the Drive Thru location will not test children under the age of 14).

Note – If symptoms develop and you or your child decide to go for testing, it is important to present this unique number (add outbreak #**) to the testing center staff so that your test results are prioritized and OPH can be notified as quickly as possible. Staff at the testing centre may be able to advise you on how long it is taking for laboratory results to be received at this time.*

We recognize that receiving this type of news can be stressful. Please know that help is available, and we encourage you to reach out for support when you need it. Please see resources available on our website: [Mental Health and COVID-19](#)

For more information:

Please visit the OPH website for information on COVID-19 [symptoms](#), [self-monitoring](#), [self-isolation](#) and [testing](#). On the website you can also find the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#), which provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Ottawa, including indicators for local monitoring and informing re-opening decisions.

If you have any questions about this letter you may contact OPH at 613-580-6744 or visit [OttawaPublicHealth.ca](#) for more information.

Sincerely,

Ottawa Public Health