

# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

May 1, 2020

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – REOPENING

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## CONTEXT

This document is intended to answer questions submitted from the network in response to the announcement that elementary schools will reopen and that distance learning will continue for the rest of the school network. This tool will be updated regularly. The responses provided in this document are intended as ministerial guidelines for returning to class and continuing the school year. A guide published by the CNESST will also be available shortly to answer various questions.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### 1. What is the procedure for responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19?

The health and safety of students and staff is the first priority. Any person (student or school staff member) showing symptoms of COVID-19 is prohibited from entering the school for a period of 14 days. If the person is a student, pedagogical support will be offered during this period.

When staff or students show symptoms that may suggest COVID-19 (fever, cough, breathing difficulties, loss of sense of smell, or other symptoms), they must be isolated in a room designated for this purpose.

An emergency kit that is ready to be used in a COVID-19 situation, containing masks, gloves, eye protection, a resealable bag and a smock (gown) as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, must be available in schools.

Schools must follow the directives and recommendations issued by the public health authorities.

### 2. Will there be COVID-19 screening tests in schools?

No. Just like any citizen with symptoms of COVID-19, students must stay home and seek health advice. A good reference source is the COVID-19 Self-care Guide (<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-002492>), which will provide instructions on what to do. Information about the steps to follow, including how to determine if you need to take a test, is also available at Québec.ca (<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/>).

### 3. How do I find out if my city is in a hot zone or a cold zone?

The cold zone includes all municipalities located outside the Montréal metropolitan community. The hot zone includes all municipalities located within the Montréal metropolitan community (<https://cmm.qc.ca/a-propos/territoires-et-municipalites/>).

### 4. [NEW] Is access to science laboratories permitted?

In order to limit the circulation of people within schools and reduce the risk of contamination, laboratories will remain closed, along with libraries.

## 5. **[NEW] Why not open secondary schools?**

We are following the recommendation of the public health authorities, who deem it advisable for secondary schools to remain closed for the time being in order to minimize the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus.

Elementary schools are usually smaller than secondary schools. Secondary school students are also more autonomous and more likely to successfully complete their school year through distance learning.

## PARENTAL CHOICES REGARDING THE RETURN TO SCHOOL

### 6. **Do parents have only one chance to decide whether or not to send their children back to school?**

The educational institution where the children are enrolled will contact parents one week before the schools reopen to ask whether they intend to have their children return to class and to determine their transportation needs, if parents are not able to drive their children to school. Parents who would like their children to return to school in the weeks following the planned return must also advise their children's educational institution one week before the children's return.

### 7. **Can parents change their minds?**

Adjustments may be made progressively if other parents indicate their interest over time. However, parents who would like their children to return to school in the weeks following the reopening must contact their children's educational institution one week before the planned return. This is necessary to ensure that safety guidelines are followed. School service centres and school teams will communicate the specific details to their community. On the other hand, parents who have registered their children for school may decide not to send them.

### 8. **Can a teacher recommend that a student return to class?**

Teachers are professionals and are in a good position to understand the academic needs of students in their classes. Taking student academic performance over the last few months into consideration, teachers may strongly recommend that parents return their children to class.

## DAYCARE SERVICES

### 9. **When will the emergency daycare services open?**

Emergency school daycare services will continue to be offered until May 8, inclusive, (or until May 15 in the Montréal metropolitan community) for school staff and workers in healthcare, social services and essential services. Parents who would like to send their children to these centres must use the online registration form available at: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/emergency-daycare-services/>.

### 10. **What are the opening hours of the daycare centres?**

The emergency daycare centres are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (until May 8, inclusive, or until May 15 in the Montréal metropolitan community).

## 11. What is the educator-child ratio in emergency school daycare services?

In emergency daycare centres in schools, the planned ratio is 10 children per educator. Once regular daycare services resume, a maximum of 15 children per room will be permitted, as well as maintaining the ratio of 10 children per educator.

## 12. Can children use the daycare services even if they were not registered at the start of the school year?

Starting May 11 (and May 19 in the Montréal metropolitan community), emergency daycare services will be replaced with regular daycare services in each of the schools that are open at that time. These services will be available to parents whose children were registered as of March 13, 2020. Any family with children enrolled at a school can register for that school's daycare services by following the standard procedures.

## 13. Will daycare groups be limited to the students who are normally in that group?

Students will use a single room for classes, lunch and daycare. Students will stay in the same group at all times.

## 14. [NEW] When will the emergency school daycare services close?

Emergency school daycare services will close on May 8, with the exception of the services provided in the Montréal metropolitan community, which will remain available until May 15. Regular daycare services will then resume according to the usual schedule.

## 15. [NEW] Will all private school personnel have access to emergency daycare services for their children? If so, starting when?

Emergency daycare services will be available to all personnel of private schools offering preschool or elementary-level education, from May 4 to May 8 inclusive (or to May 15 in the Montréal metropolitan community). Parents who would like to send their children to these daycare centres must use the online registration form. <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/emergency-daycare-services/>.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

### 16. Will the school calendar be respected?

There are no plans to extend classes beyond June 23.

### 17. Will the planned pedagogical days still take place?

The school calendar for the current year is managed by each school board. Pedagogical days and their cancellation, if necessary, are managed at the local level.

## SCHEDULE

### 18. Will school be open full-time?

Yes.

## **19. Will all the students arrive in the schoolyard at the same time in the morning?**

The details of each school's schedule will be determined locally. Each institution may create its own procedures in response to its specific reality and in order to respect health guidelines.

## **STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPS, SOCIAL MALADJUSTMENTS OR LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

## **20. Will multidisciplinary teams be created to find solutions for the potential issues caused by physical distancing for students with disabilities or students who require close-contact interventions?**

Following the announcement that kindergartens and elementary schools are reopening, school teams have several days to prepare for students to return to class. Each school is responsible for implementing its own measures and organizing services based on its context and the needs of its students. The present situation calls for flexibility and solutions adapted to different student populations and educational realities.

## **21. Some students have specific needs that require one-on-one support and have behaviours that may increase risk (spitting in the face, drooling, being held by the hand, feeding or diaper changing). Will protective equipment be available for staff?**

The Minister of Education and Higher Education has announced the safe and progressive reopening of kindergartens and elementary schools, while underlining the importance of strictly respecting the guidelines and recommendations of public health authorities. However, the situation requires us to show flexibility in order to find solutions adapted to the different realities of student populations.

The Ministère is aware that some students have difficulties or specific needs that require school staff to be in close contact with them in order to provide services or interventions. More details will be provided shortly, consistent with public health guidelines, about protective and disinfecting equipment that will be provided to school staff to ensure their safety.

## **22. What services will be offered to students with disabilities, social maladjustments or learning difficulties?**

Schools will make adjustments for students who were experiencing learning difficulties before the closure of schools and for students whose learning was particularly affected by the closure. Work plans will be suggested and other interventions will also be implemented based on the situations of these students (virtual or telephone support from teachers, professionals or support staff). The level of intervention will be adjusted based on the situation of each student involved.

## **23. Will individualized education plans (IEPs) be taken into account and revised, if necessary, considering the situation?**

School administrations, with help from their teams, can identify the IEPs that need to be revised so that they can be adjusted based on the needs of the students. Various measures in the IEP can be implemented, whether the student returns to school or is distance learning.

## STUDENT HEALTH

### 24. Will students have access to specialists' services?

Improved support services will be provided by the Ministère to the stakeholders within school boards who are responsible for promoting healthy lifestyles, in order to assist with the wider promotion of positive mental health and prevention of specific problems such as anxiety. The professionals present in schools can offer the necessary services to students showing signs of anxiety or distress.

### 25. What measures will be implemented to detect any symptoms that students may have?

Please consult the following document for more information about contact and isolation: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/2902-gestion-cas-contacts-communaute-covid19.pdf> (available in French only).

## HEALTH MEASURES

### 26. Do school staff need to wear masks?

The measures recommended for schools consist in limiting the number of students to a maximum of 15 per group and respecting the 2-metre physical distancing rule. As long as it is possible to maintain this distance, it is not necessary to require that masks be worn, except under specific conditions, such as in classes where students have special needs. As the INSPQ does not recommend the wearing of masks when physical distancing rules are respected, schools will not be supplied with masks. However, teachers who would feel more comfortable wearing a mask can consult the section on wearing a face covering in public ([quebec.ca/coronavirus](http://quebec.ca/coronavirus)) to learn how to make a face mask and wear it properly.

### 27. With regard to obtaining supplies of certain products related to the pandemic, is it possible to relax some of the requirements under the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*?

The Ministère is currently in discussions with Collecto and the school boards in order to plan the purchase of required equipment.

### 28. We need to plan for the routine disinfection of drinking fountains. Are there standards for this?

The directives and recommendations will be published by the public health authorities. If action needs to be taken for drinking fountains, it will be included in the guide prepared by the CNESST and the public health authorities for the school network.

### 29. Will disinfectant be provided for students and staff on-site?

Yes. The Ministère is currently working with the public health authorities to determine what supplies are needed for the reopening and is in discussions with Collecto and school boards to plan the purchase of the required equipment.

### 30. What are the recommended measures for arranging staff rooms in order to respect physical distancing?

School boards are responsible for the physical organization of the rooms, provided they respect the 2-metre distancing rule recommended by the public health authorities.

## 31. How will the handwashing period be organized?

The school team will be responsible for implementing all the recommendations issued by the public health authorities. Students will be required to wash their hands at least four times per day: when they arrive at school, before and after lunch, and before they leave the school.

## 32. What are the instructions for cleaning the building (offices, bathrooms, etc.)?

The school team will be responsible for implementing all the recommendations issued by the public health authorities.

## 33. What is the hygiene protocol for handing documents, teaching materials, games?

Directives and recommendations will be included in the guide sent to the school network by the CNESST and the public health authorities.

## 34. What is the maintenance protocol for each area frequented by students and staff?

Directives and recommendations will be included in the guide sent to the school network by the CNESST and the public health authorities.

## 35. [NEW] Will library staff have to wear gloves and a mask, disinfect all the books and quarantine them for four or five days after they disinfect them?

In order to limit the circulation of people within schools and reduce the risk of contamination, libraries will remain closed, along with laboratories.

## 36. [NEW] Will parents be allowed to enter the school?

No. Parents and other visitors will not be allowed inside the school.

## 37. [NEW] Will protective and disinfecting equipment (gloves, masks, visors, plexiglass, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer, etc.) be made available to private schools?

The Ministère is currently working with authorities in the health system to evaluate how best to facilitate the acquisition of essential materials and equipment by educational institutions in both the public and private sectors in order to ensure that they are able to meet the minimum requirements. Nevertheless, the schools will still be responsible, as always, for obtaining materials and equipment based on their needs and those of their clientele.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

### 38. What if we have difficulty organizing the classrooms according to the standards required by the public health authorities?

If the rooms normally used by classes seem too small to accommodate a maximum of 15 students while respecting the recommendation of 2 metres of physical distancing between them, move the furniture around and reconfigure the room to make optimum use of the space. You might also consider using other areas in the school or elsewhere, including secondary schools.

## **39. Are parents who work in the healthcare sector included in plans for the return to school?**

Yes. Children of healthcare personnel attended emergency school daycare centres and there is nothing to indicate that this had a negative impact on the curve of the pandemic.

## **40. The limit is 15 students per classroom. If the number of students who want to attend class exceeds 15, how will they be chosen?**

The measure actually states a maximum of 15 students per room. If the configuration of the school (size of rooms, etc.) makes it impossible to have 15 students per room or if more than 15 students from the same class come to school, the class will be divided into separate groups, each with their own room.

At this time, it is difficult to predict staffing needs because the number of students who will be returning to class is not yet known. However, with the planned ratio of 1 teacher per 15 students and the exceptions for vulnerable employees comes increased pressure to find elementary school teachers. Initially, schools can call on substitute teachers and on education students and graduates to fill in, if needed. Permanent and contractual secondary school teachers, as well as non-teaching professionals, administrative and support staff who are currently employed, could also be called upon.

Ministerial Order 2020-008 from the Minister of Health and Social Services allows school boards to reassign their personnel where and when needed. This includes reassigning secondary school teachers to elementary schools.

## **41. Can students be refused in order to leave space to accommodate students with difficulties?**

Vulnerable students are encouraged to return to class as soon as possible so that they can benefit from the best pedagogical support, but no child will be refused.

## **42. What will the schools do if all the students show up?**

As much as possible, students will remain in one room throughout the day and this is where pedagogical support activities, lunchtime and school daycare services will take place. This will free up other less frequently used rooms (library, laboratory, etc.) for other activities or for accommodating additional groups of no more than 15 students.

Some students, such as those in Cycle Three, could be sent to classrooms in secondary schools, thus allowing the younger students to remain in their regular school.

Community and municipal facilities could also be used to provide students with educational services near their home.

## **43. How will mealtimes be organized?**

As much as possible, students will remain in one room throughout the day and this is where pedagogical support activities, lunchtime and school daycare services will also take place.

## **44. How will recesses be organized?**

When they arrive at school or during recess, the students must remain in their groups (maximum of 15 students) and not start to play with other groups. It is still forbidden to use playground equipment.

**45. Is it possible that my child will not be in the same class as before and will have a different teacher?**

Yes. If more than 15 students in the same class return to school, separate groups will be formed, each with their own room and their own teacher, who will not necessarily be the usual homeroom teacher.

**46. Will extracurricular activities resume?**

Extracurricular activities are suspended in order to avoid non-essential gatherings.

**47. [NEW] Will children have to eat cold lunches, as was the case in the emergency daycare centres?**

In order to limit the circulation of people within schools, students will have to bring their own lunch (cold or kept hot in a thermos). The Breakfast Club will resume its activities.

## DISTANCE EDUCATION

**48. If the teacher is with students in the classroom, who will support the students who remain at home?**

The school team will implement a system that allows students in class and students at home to receive support. The Ministère has also made a commitment to support them. Teachers will receive training and measures will be implemented to allow students to retrieve their school books, notebooks and personal effects. In addition, students remaining at home who need technological tools will be able to borrow these tools so that they can continue learning during this exceptional period. Personnel with conditions that make them vulnerable to COVID-19 and require them to stay at home might be given this assignment.

**49. Will distance education be offered only to secondary school students?**

No. Distance education will continue at the elementary level. Personalized educational activities kits will still be sent, the Open School website will remain available and the arrangements with Télé-Québec will remain in force. Distance education will also be available to students enrolled in adult general education and in vocational training.

**50. How can follow-up or courses be provided to elementary school students who remain at home?**

One possible solution is to use the computer's camera to connect students at home with their classrooms so they can attend class at the same time as their classmates. Families will have to be notified in advance about certain classes that cover the basic subjects by using the educational activities kits sent each week.

**51. How will children who are staying at home to protect a parent who is at risk due to a health condition be able to participate in class? A camera in the classroom so they can feel they are part of the group at school, listen to the teacher and follow the subject matter? Or will their situation be handled differently, isolating them even further?**

The choice of methods, tools and activities for children who remain at home is at the professional discretion of each teacher. The pedagogical and professional support currently in place will be maintained and enhanced.

## **52. If we do not send our children to school, will the teachers send us material?**

Yes. Elementary and secondary school students who remain at home will receive assignments to do and there will be weekly follow-ups carried out by teachers and multidisciplinary teams.

## **53. Considering that schooling is compulsory up to the age of 16 and “optional” after that, how can we make sure that our young people, especially those in secondary school, continue their studies?**

All secondary school students can continue their learning at a distance and will benefit from enhanced and personalized pedagogical support. Schools will provide work plans each week and teachers will carry out regular follow-ups, daily if possible. As they are more autonomous and have a better grasp of technology, secondary school students require less assistance to follow their courses than do elementary school students, and it is easier for them to continue their learning online. The Ministère will also ensure that professional resources are available for secondary school students, even at a distance.

## **54. Parents who are working from home cannot necessarily manage their time in accordance with the government’s plans. Mention is often made of doing activities with parents. Is it possible to add that it is important to communicate with a teacher via videoconference in order to carry out these activities?**

All students, whether they are in preschool, elementary school or secondary school, who are continuing to learn at a distance will benefit from enhanced pedagogical support. Their school will supply them with a work plan and assignments every week, and teachers will carry out regular follow-ups, daily if possible. Although the choice of methods, tools and activities is at the professional discretion of each teacher, training will be offered to support them.

Parents of elementary school students who believe that it is better to keep schooling their children at home should follow up on the assignments provided by the teacher or the school.

## **55. Has the Ministère thought of an option for families where both parents work in essential services? A Secondary I student needs support but if both parents are working full-time, they will not have time to go over every subject.**

With all school staff back at work full-time, this will allow for greater support for students and will make life easier for families.

Teachers will establish personalized contact with a parent of each student, first prioritizing contact with the parents of vulnerable students. These calls or virtual meetings will allow teachers to talk with the parent(s) of each of their students about the return to school and the measures that must be taken. Given the possibility of having access to instructional materials, teachers could email the course notes to students so that those who want to progress can do so in a more self-taught fashion.

The choice of methods, tools and activities is at the professional discretion of each teacher.

Students who want to move further ahead can also explore the resources offered by the Open School website and Télé-Québec en classe.

## **56. Can elementary school students obtain technological tools if their parents choose to have them remain at home?**

To ensure that students, no matter what their situation, can finish acquiring essential learning before the end of the school year and are quickly equipped to do so, school boards are to lend the technological tools they have available to all students and staff of elementary and secondary schools who need them.

The Ministère has also reserved 15 000 LTE iPads from Apple, and they will be available in 7 to 10 days to school boards who wish to purchase them. Some suppliers who are already under contract will make devices equipped with cellular connection available. Lastly, Telus will be providing free cellular connection for these devices until June 30, 2020.

## **57. What support will new users of these 15 000 technological devices receive?**

Technical support should be available locally in the service centres to assist teachers and possibly students (and their parents) in using information technology equipment and digital tools (software, platforms, etc.).

## **58. How can parents who wish to receive a tablet apply for one?**

The school boards will provide details on the distribution of these devices in a timely fashion.

## **59. What if Telus does not service our region?**

As the Québec government's supplier of mobile telephone service, Telus and its affiliates offer excellent coverage of the entire province. However, it is possible that some areas might not be covered. In that case, other ways must be found to communicate with students.

## **60. [NEW] Regarding the loan of tablets announced by the Ministère, what happens if a tablet is damaged? Who will pay to have it repaired? Will the tablets come with protective cases?**

It is recommended that school boards invest in AppleCare+ coverage and protective cases at the time of purchase. The tablets will be the property of the school boards, which will lend them out.

## **61. [NEW] Will there be a limit to the number of students who have access to a free connection?**

No. There is no limit to the number of students who may have access to a free connection, whether they borrow a tablet from the school board or acquire one through the government offer. The school boards are responsible for estimating needs in this regard.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### **62. [NEW] Is it possible to hold exams in person?**

As long as the 2-metre physical distancing rule is respected, and considering that the primary goal is to allow students to complete their training, evaluation testing may be carried out provided that the basic conditions previously announced are met: smaller groups and appropriate health measures.

### **63. [NEW] When do vocational training teachers have to return to work in their training centres?**

Personnel throughout Québec are expected to assume their full workload as of May 4. Local measures must ensure that health risks are reduced to a minimum. Where it is deemed possible for personnel to continue providing distance education and to perform some or all of their tasks from home, they may do so. Nevertheless, care must be taken to ensure that the total amount of work carried out on- and off-site is equivalent to the regular workload expected of personnel.

**64. [NEW] When can vocational training students resume their studies?**

Distance learning must be the preferred approach whenever possible. For more technical activities that cannot be carried out online, training can resume on site in smaller groups as of May 11 outside the boundaries of the Montréal metropolitan community and as of May 19 within the boundaries of the Montréal metropolitan community. Where a training centre is situated with respect to these boundaries is determined by its address. In establishing the smaller groups, it should be noted that classes are usually made up of 22 students and that measures must be put in place to minimize public health risks. The training centre teams are responsible for determining the rules that will apply in various situations with respect to each group (e.g. lunch period).

**65. [NEW] Is it possible to hold computer labs in vocational training?**

Yes, in smaller groups, provided that public health rules are respected.

**66. [NEW] What will be done for students who do not wish to resume their training immediately?**

These students may be granted a justified absence.

**67. [NEW] Will it be possible to start doing internships again?**

Yes. Businesses are gradually opening their doors in step with the plan to relaunch the economy. In cases where it is not feasible to do an internship at this time, the order in which competencies are taught could be changed to allow students to keep progressing through their program until such time as it becomes possible to do an internship.

## ADULT GENERAL EDUCATION

**68. [NEW] Will students in adult general education be evaluated in their adult education centre?**

Students will be admitted in smaller groups to adult education centres to write ministerial exams as of May 11 (May 19 in the case of centres within the Montréal metropolitan community).

## SUBJECTS

**69. Will all subjects be taught?**

Students will consolidate their learning and acquired competencies, whether at home or through pedagogical support services, and will complete the essential knowledge required to move up to the next level. The emphasis will be placed on the basic subjects listed in the *Basic school regulation* (languages, mathematics, history and science).

**70. Will new competencies be taught between now and the end of the school year?**

Efforts will be focused both on the consolidation of the acquired competencies and on the continued learning of essential knowledge. Emphasis will be placed on the core subjects provided for in the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* (languages, mathematics, history and science).

## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

### 71. Who will have the right to school transportation?

School transportation services will be reduced to a minimum and will be subject to major restrictions in order to comply with the measures issued by public health authorities. Children who reside at the same address may sit together on the same seat since they share the same home. We encourage parents to make their own arrangements for their children's transportation, unless it is absolutely impossible for them to do so. If children must use school transportation, parents must remind them of the importance of avoiding contact with others. Students who were previously eligible for school transportation continue to be. Parents must, however, notify the school one week in advance if their child needs school transportation. School transportation organized by a school board for daily attendance at school is free of charge.

### 72. Will school transportation be available at lunchtime?

No. There are no plans to offer school transportation at lunchtime.

### 73. How will school transportation be organized?

The limit of one child per seat must be respected, and every second seat must be empty. Parents are asked to bring their children to school, unless it is absolutely impossible for them to do so.

### 74. What will happen if there are too many students for one route?

The school boards will adjust the routes. Parents who need transportation for their child must notify the school in advance.

### 75. It will be difficult for drivers behind a plexiglass barrier to manage rowdy students. If necessary, will the drivers be able to move out from behind the barrier?

The drivers' role and responsibilities remain the same. Student safety is the priority.

### 76. Who is providing the protection (plexiglass barrier) for drivers? The school board? The transportation company? Who is going to pay for it?

Stand by for details regarding protective equipment that can be used in school buses and regarding who is responsible for providing it. A group purchasing plan could be implemented.

Any additional costs incurred as a direct result of these COVID-19 measures could be tallied by the school boards. For government accountability reports, it is important to identify all additional expenses that are directly associated with the COVID-19 measures and incurred on or after March 13, 2020, the date the government declared a public health emergency. In addition to the additional expenses incurred, the organizations must be able to indicate the revenues lost because of COVID-19, if applicable, and any cost savings resulting from the pandemic. Further information on the costs to be identified and the procedure for gathering information will be sent to the school boards as soon as possible.

**77. How can the drivers ensure discipline while complying with physical distancing measures?**

Parents are encouraged to make other arrangements for their children's transportation, unless it is absolutely impossible for them to do so. If children must use school transportation, parents must remind them of the importance of avoiding contact with others. The driver's role and responsibilities remain the same. Student safety is the priority.

**78. The school buses must be equipped to enable children to wash their hands as they board the bus. There will be costs associated with this new measure. Who will pay for them?**

The public health authorities are responsible for this type of issue and we have asked them for instructions.

**79. How can the transportation agreements with private schools who are expecting services be honoured?**

It is up to the organizations involved to come to an agreement on how to respect the measures issued by the public health authorities and any provisions in effect.

**80. [NEW] Who is providing the protection (plexiglass barrier) for drivers? The school board? The transportation company? Who is going to pay for it?**

Stand by for details regarding protective equipment that can be used in school buses and regarding who is responsible for providing it. A group purchasing plan could be implemented.

Any additional costs incurred by these measures could be tallied by the school boards.

## FUNDING

**81. [NEW] What allocations will be provided to cover all the additional costs?**

Details will be forthcoming regarding the reimbursement of any additional expenses.

In the meantime, the school boards are encouraged to record any additional costs that are incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 measures.

## LABOUR RELATIONS

**82. Will all staff be tested for COVID-19 before returning to work?**

No, there are no guidelines from the public health authorities to that effect.

**83. Will the employer assign secondary school teachers and specialists to other duties?**

Ministerial Order 2020-008 of the Minister of Health and Social Services allows school boards to redeploy personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so. In particular, it allows for secondary school teachers to be assigned to elementary schools.

- The Order requires that the unions and associations concerned be consulted before the application of this measure, unless the urgency of the situation does not permit doing so.

- 84. Are there any measures planned to expand the duties of elementary school teachers, such as lunchtime supervision or providing support to students who do not return to school?**

Considering Ministerial Order 2020-008 (renewed by Ministerial Order 2020-022), the necessary adjustments are possible. The unions and associations concerned must be consulted.

- 85. What exemptions (medical conditions, aged 60 and over, pregnancy, working with children with specific medical conditions, etc.) apply to staff? What are their working conditions?**

It is not recommended that personnel with a health condition that makes them vulnerable (e.g. chronic disease, severe immunodeficiency, pregnancy, aged 60 or older) return to school. They could be assigned duties other than their usual responsibilities. For health and safety reasons, these staff members are encouraged to delay their return to school until September 2020.

- 86. Can teachers and staff members who have concerns about family members with health conditions that make them vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 refuse to return to their place of work and insist on being allowed to work from home?**

School administrators and human resources officers are encouraged to take these requests into account, where possible, when assigning duties, considering that certain tasks require staff to be present in the classroom, while other tasks may very well be carried out remotely, such as supporting students who continue to learn from home.

- 87. Are staff working from home required to wait until the teachers return to work, or must they return to the schools immediately? Will the start dates be the same for everyone?**

All elementary school staff are expected to be present at their place of work as of May 4. All secondary school staff can be called in to their place of work as of May 4. School administrators are responsible for making the decision and for calling in the staff they require. School administrators must also determine whether to allow staff to work from home and under what conditions.

- 88. I live with my elderly parents. Am I obliged to return to work?**

There are no exemption rules that apply with respect to the health of loved ones. Children and workers are asked to exercise caution when returning home, by washing their hands, for example, and changing their clothes.

- 89. I have a child with special needs. Am I obliged to return to work?**

The school boards are responsible for managing personnel. It is therefore incumbent upon the school board to assess individual situations based on a specific set of circumstances.

- 90. Given that parents can choose whether or not to send their children back to school, will all elementary school staff be called in to work or will it depend on enrolment?**

All personnel must return to work in all schools, barring exceptions. A full staff at the workplace will help to better support students and make the families' lives easier.

- 91. When will support staff be allowed to return to the schools?**

All personnel is expected to be present at their place of work as of May 4.

**92. Are the Ministerial Orders still in effect?**

Yes.

**93. Will we be required to work in a different job category or for a different bargaining unit?**

Ministerial Order 2020-008 of the Minister of Health and Social Services allows school boards to redeploy personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so. Personnel may thus be assigned to duties of another position title, to another bargaining unit or to another employer.

**94. How will educators be called in?**

As employers, the school boards are responsible for managing human resources and applying the provisions relating to personnel management.

**95. Can visiting teaching staff (supply teachers, specialists, etc.) work in more than one school given that contamination risks are to be minimized?**

Ministerial Order 2020-008 (renewed by Ministerial Order 2020-022) amends certain provisions of national, local or regional agreements in force as follows:

- All provisions in these agreements that deal with the filling of absences or replacement, assignment, reassignment or personnel displacement are amended to enable the school boards to assign personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so. Personnel may thus be assigned to duties of another position title, to another bargaining unit or to another employer.
- Ministerial Order 2020-008 of the Minister of Health and Social Services allows school boards to redeploy personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so. In particular, it permits the reassignment of secondary school teachers (and other professionals) to elementary schools.
- – The Order requires that the unions and associations concerned be consulted before the application of this measure, unless the urgency of the situation does not permit doing so.
- – This Order was renewed by Ministerial Order 2020-022 on April 22, 2020.
- According to the directives issued by the public health authorities, no guidelines prevent a teacher from working in more than one location.

**96. What solutions are planned concerning recess, lunchtime and specialist time so that weekly educational task hours are respected?**

Ministerial Order 2020-008 of the Minister of Health and Social Services allows school boards to redeploy personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so. In particular, it permits the reassignment of secondary school teachers to elementary schools.

The Order requires that the unions and associations concerned be consulted before the application of this measure, unless the urgency of the situation does not permit doing so. We are leaving it up to the school boards to consult the local unions in this regard.

97. **How will in-class teaching and personalized follow-up tasks be distributed?**

Teaching and personalized follow-up tasks should be distributed in collaboration with the school team. However, if a school is short of staff, the school board can call in other personnel to help as it has the latitude necessary to reassign personnel. It is recommended that the school boards consult the local unions on the reassignment process.

98. **[NEW] Are staff allowed to move between two schools?**

Ministerial Order 2020-008 of the Minister of Health and Social Services, which was renewed by Ministerial Order 2020-022, allows school boards to redeploy personnel to the location and at the time where needs justify doing so.

According to the directives issued by the public health authorities, no guidelines prevent a teacher from working in more than one location.

99. **[NEW] Will teaching staff who do not live in the same region as their place of work be allowed to travel between regions?**

It will be possible to travel between regions that have not been closed by the public health authorities.

100. **[NEW] How will staff who contract the coronavirus be paid?**

The CNESST provides that a worker who becomes infected with COVID-19 during the course of their employment may be entitled to the usual benefits and services provided under the *Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases* (AIAOD). For more information, visit <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/salle-de-presse/covid-19-info-en/Pages/covid-19.aspx>.

If an employee contracts COVID-19 outside of work and is unable to work (cannot work remotely), regular wage loss insurance applies. Up to the end of the waiting period, the employee's bank of sick days is debited.

If an employee contracts COVID-19 outside of work, but is able to work remotely, they continue to receive their salary and their bank of sick days is not debited.

101. **[NEW] What will happen to staff who refuse to return to work?**

The *Act respecting occupational health and safety* stipulates that a worker has the right to refuse to perform particular work if they have reasonable grounds to believe that the performance of that work would expose them to danger to their health, safety or physical well-being. The guide produced by the CNESST specifically for the education network will be available soon and will shed light on this subject. An employee cannot be dismissed for exercising their right of refusal; they will continue to receive their salary and cannot be penalized. It is the employer's responsibility to provide evidence if they believe that the employee is abusing their right.

As employers, the school boards are responsible for managing human resources in accordance with legislation and the collective agreements. It is therefore incumbent upon the school board to assess the individual situations of individuals who refuse to return to work, based on a specific set of circumstances.

102. **[NEW] What will specialists at the elementary level do?**

The school boards should have the latitude to reassign personnel. It is recommended that they consult the local unions regarding reassignment procedures.

103. **[NEW] Will private schools be subject to the same rules regarding the reopening of schools? Will these rules apply to students and staff in both elementary and secondary schools? Will private schools have to recall all staff who were laid off?**

Yes, the same rules apply to the private network. As employers of their staff, private schools can make any related decisions in keeping with the collective and local agreements. However, they must ensure to have all the staff required in order to comply with the established guidelines for reopening the schools and providing students with the necessary services, whether in class or at a distance.

104. **[NEW] Will administrators of private schools be obliged to pay staff members who have been advised not to return to the workplace (e.g. chronic disease, severe immunodeficiency, pregnancy or breastfeeding, aged 60 or older)?**

It is not recommended that personnel with a health condition that makes them vulnerable (e.g. chronic disease, severe immunodeficiency, pregnancy or breastfeeding, aged 60 or older) return to school. As the employers of these staff members, private schools can make any related decisions in keeping with the collective and local agreements.

105. **[NEW] Has it been verified whether or not teachers will receive the compensation of 1/1000 when assigned a workload greater than that provided for in the collective agreement?**

Teachers will be paid the salary to which they are entitled within the school board as per the provisions of the collective agreement and the work carried out. This includes the 1/1000.

## EMPLOYEES IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

106. **I have been volunteering in a CHSLD, so do I need to isolate myself for 14 days prior to returning to school? What are the standards that govern the return to work for employees in the education system who have been working in the healthcare system?**

People who have been working in the CHSLDs are not obliged to isolate themselves for 14 days unless they had medium-to-high risk contact with someone with COVID-19. Therefore, any contact that a worker had with someone with COVID-19 in the 48 hours prior to the appearance of symptoms up until the time that person was moved out of isolation needs to be evaluated.

The following medium-to-high risk contacts require an isolation period of 14 days:

- providing physical care to a confirmed case without using a mask or any other form of protection
- being in direct contact with infectious bodily fluids (being sprayed in the face by droplets when the patient coughed or sneezed, having touched their face after having touched a tissue full of secretions with bare hands without having washed their hands afterward, etc.)
- having had prolonged contact with a case, for at least 15 minutes and within less than 2 metres, when not wearing protective equipment (procedural mask, gown, gloves, visor)

For more information on contacts and isolation, please read the following datasheet: <https://www.inspq.gc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/2902-gestion-cas-contacts-communaute-covid19.pdf> (available in French only).

Ultimately, it is crucial that there be strict application of a policy regarding the obligatory absence from the workplace for employees who present symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 (fever, cough, breathing difficulties, sudden loss of sense of smell or taste, or other symptoms listed on the following site:

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/general-information-about-coronavirus/#c46469>

If an employee starts to suffer from symptoms while in the workplace, there needs to be a procedure for isolating them in a room and bringing them a procedural (or surgical) mask, if available. Calling 1-877-644-4545 is also essential.

**107. [NEW] Should staff assigned to the health network return to the education network?**

Education personnel will remain assigned to the health network so long as they are needed in the fight against COVID-19. Training centres must make the necessary provisions to quickly resume the training of students who are currently unable to continue their studies once their teacher is released from the health network.

## TÉLUQ TRAINING

**108. Can the training on distance education be offered to technical support employees who are working in direct student services and who are already following up with students?**

Although this training is mainly for teachers at the elementary, secondary, college and university levels, it can also be taken by other staff members in the education system (non-teaching professionals, support staff or administrators) who want to learn about distance education. All staff members can also visit the new “Teachers” section available since April 27 on the [ecoleouverte.ca/en/](https://ecoleouverte.ca/en/) website. It contains many resources for starting distance learning.

**109. [NEW] Will the teachers and non-teaching professionals at private schools have access to the free training on distance education offered by TÉLUQ?**

Although this training is mainly for teachers at the elementary, secondary, college and university levels, it can also be taken by other staff members in the education system (non-teaching professionals, support staff or administrators) who want to learn about distance education. The private network can also access this training.