



Questions and Answers to Support Child Care and Before- and After-School Programs During the 2020-21 School Year in TDSB Schools

(Last Revision Date: February 16, 2021)

1. What are TDSB's mask requirements for students, staff, parents/guardians and visitors?

The TDSB's COVID-19 Mask Procedure has been developed to address our collective responsibility to follow public health and Ministry of Education requirements known to be effective in combatting the transmission of COVID-19.

For up to date information about TDSB mask requirements for students, staff, parents/guardians and visitors, please visit our website:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Health-and-Safety/Mask-and-Face-Covering-Requirements-For-TDSB-Students-and-Staff>

2. Are children in child care and/or BASP required to wear masks in common areas such as hallways? (updated)

All child care and BASPs must ensure that their respective Ministry and TPH requirements for mask use are met throughout program operations. Currently, this is required for children in grade one and above.

In addition to Ministry and TPH requirements, all children over the age of two must wear a mask while in common areas of TDSB schools.

3. How is TDSB addressing ventilation in schools?

Ventilation systems in schools have been checked and adjusted to ensure optimum functioning. As well, portable HEPA air filter units have been installed in classrooms where mechanical ventilation is not an option.

According to Toronto Public Health, increasing fresh air is an important strategy in our schools, and they recommend that windows in classrooms be opened for periods of time throughout the day to introduce fresh air into your program space. While heating systems will be turned up, it's likely that schools will be cooler than normal. Parents have been encouraged to dress children with this in mind, and to provide an extra layer of clothing to ensure comfort throughout the day.

4. Can BASPs access additional space?

BASPs who wish to expand their programs to increase capacity and serve additional students may do so by working with principals and the Child Care Services team. However, additional space to serve the current licenced capacity of students cannot be granted at this time.

5. What screening is required as students transition between BASP and school?

Schools and BASPs are each required to ensure that their respective screening protocols are carried out daily, as required by TPH. Students who begin their day in the BASP will be required to follow school screening (verification) protocols as well. To support smooth transitions for students, schools and BASPs are encouraged to remind families that separate screening is required for both programs.

For up to date information about TDSB screening protocols, please visit our website: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Health-and-Safety/Daily-Health-Screening>.

6. Can a space be designated for child care and/or BASP screening?

Yes, this will be in place to meet Toronto Public Health requirements. Given that all school buildings are different, this must be coordinated locally with the school principal to ensure that health and safety requirements can be maintained for all. Setup for screening must adhere to Toronto Fire Services regulations and therefore, furniture set up in hallways must be attended at all times or taken down when unattended. It must also not block any fire exit or fire route.

7. How should information about contact-tracing be shared between school and child care?

Schools and child cares are each responsible for following the direction of TPH for their respective programs. Both must keep their respective records to support contact-tracing and share as required by TPH. Both must also ensure that TPH direction about reporting and notifications is followed at all times.

8. Is isolation space available for child care and/or BASP use?

Yes. Determination of isolation space for child care and/or BASPs should be discussed locally at the school level with the Principal. Isolation space may be the same designated space for school and child care/ BASP children.

9. Are BASPs able to provide a lunch time program for students during the COVID-19 pandemic?

No. During COVID-19, all elementary students are required to remain with their assigned cohorts throughout the core instructional day, including the lunch period. Therefore, BASP's will not be permitted to operate a program during the lunch period. All students will remain with their school cohort during lunch.

10. Is additional storage space available to child care and/or BASPs?

Determinations about available storage space for child care and/or BASPs at the school should be discussed locally with the school Principal. In some schools, storage may not be available, and operators will need to make other off-site arrangements.

In some cases, it may be possible for the child care and/or BASP to obtain a storage pod through a TDSB approved vendor, at their own expense. Approval for these requests would be dependent on local school safety needs and feasibility. Interested operators should work with the school Principal and Facility Team Leader for more information on the process for requesting storage pods.

11. How will classroom set up take place in shared spaces?

It is important for school and BASP staff to work together and coordinate the set up and use of shared spaces. This will require flexibility and planning at the local level.

Whenever possible, the planning and set up of shared space classrooms should be done jointly so these spaces can meet the requirements of both school and BASP and minimize reorganization and/or additional set up during transitions.

School and BASP staff are encouraged to develop joint working norms which may include establishing shared goals and expectations, protocols for communication, and an approach to resolving any issues that may arise. In addition, clear protocols must be developed to ensure that the use of shared materials adheres to all health and safety requirements.

12. How will shared learning materials be cleaned between school and BASP?

Both school and BASP staff are responsible for cleaning shared learning materials. Both must ensure that learning materials are cleaned at the end of each program, or materials that have not been cleaned are removed. Locally, staff should work together to come up with a system to support this.

13. How is enhanced cleaning being completed in shared space?

Enhanced cleaning occurs between cohorts as required. Caretaking staff will work with principals and BASP operators to coordinate the use of space and program transitions while this occurs.

As a general guideline, caretakers require an average of 10-15 minutes for enhanced cleaning in between cohorts for each shared space classroom. This enhanced cleaning will focus on high touch surfaces (i.e. handrails, door knobs/handles, light switches, push buttons, push plates, desk tops, toilet and faucet handles etc.) and will not include disinfecting learning materials, sweeping floors etc. Caretakers will record enhanced cleaning in the caretaking log, which is available to BASPs upon request.

During the required enhanced cleaning between BASP and instructional day transitions, BASPs are required to use alternate spaces, including outdoor space. This must be coordinated at the local school level, and may include the playground, gym, library, etc. More than one BASP group can be in the same space, as long as cohorts can maintain physical distancing.

14. How can cohort cohesion be supported between school and BASP?

In order for BASP to be operational and viable, it may not be possible to organize and limit students in the BASP to their core day groupings. In circumstances where students from different school day classes must interact to participate in the BASP, boards and BASP operators will make efforts to limit interactions between students from different classes to the greatest extent possible.

Best practices to limit interactions between students from different classes and reduce transmission of COVID-19 may include making use of large, well-ventilated spaces (e.g. gymnasium) or outdoor spaces as much as possible for the BASP.

During PA days and holiday programs, BASPs must maintain all TPH requirements, including those regarding cohorting.

15. Will BASP staff be permitted to continue working as school lunchroom supervisors (if applicable)?

BASPs and schools are required to follow the advice of TPH. As per the [City of Toronto's Before and After School Programs Tips and Considerations training module](#), "a staff member who works in a before- and after-school program can have another job somewhere else. For example, they could work as a lunch-time supervisor for a school and return to your program afterwards".

16. Will staff rooms continue to be available for child care and BASP staff?

Yes, there are no changes to staff room access; however, TPH guidelines and requirements (e.g., the use of PPE) will continue to be expected from any individual accessing space in a school. If PPE is removed for eating, physical distancing must be maintained.

17. Will child care and BASPs be permitted to use play structures?

All TDSB play structures are open to students during the core school day (one cohort at a time) and continue to be open to the public outside of school hours. Play structures may continue to be used by child care and BASPs.

Everyone who uses play structures should practice hand hygiene before and after use.

18. Will TDSB issue permits for child care board of directors' meetings?

In an effort to reduce health and safety risks in schools, at this time the TDSB is limiting the number of permits issued. TDSB will not be issuing permits for child care board of directors meetings until further notice.

19. If an entire school is dismissed due to cases of COVID or TPH COVID investigations, can the child care and BASP remain open?

If an entire school is dismissed, the BASP must close to support the isolation of school students. On a case by case basis, TPH will determine whether the 0-4 child care can remain open. It is important for child cares to connect directly with TPH for advice and direction when they become aware of a school dismissal that may impact their child care operations.