

March 8, 2021

Dear UCDSB Families,

There has been a lot happening within our school district over the last month and we want to take this opportunity to let you know of some of the most recent developments.

Updated 2020-2021 School Year Calendar

As you are aware, the Ministry of Education has postponed the March spring break for all public school boards in Ontario, with the new break now taking place from April 12-April 16. You can find the newly updated school year calendar [on our website](#).

The timing change of the spring break also resulted in the need for our school district to update the Grade 9-12 Quadmester Calendar. This calendar is also [on our website](#).

Key dates are as follows:

- April 19 is the last day of Quadmester 3. **This day will be a remote learning day for Grade 9-12 students.**
- Quadmester 4 starts on April 20.

There has been no change to end of the school year. The last day of classes for all students will be June 25.

Short-term Staffing Shortages

In [September](#), we let our families know that due to a variety of reasons related to the pandemic, school boards across the province are having challenges covering employee absences at schools. As the pandemic has progressed and [more rigorous screening and isolation requirements are back in place](#), many of our schools are again having difficulty finding coverage for staff who are away from school.

We continue to actively recruit, interview and hire teachers for long-term occasional work, bring back retired staff members, and redeploy central staff when possible, however, it is important for our UCDSB families to know if we are unable to have adequate staff in our schools to supervise our students, classes within a school may need to be cancelled until coverage can be found.

This would be a last resort as it means that those students in the class would not be able to attend school that day. Should this happen, the school would make every effort to have online resources available during the length of the class closure.

Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing in Schools

As part of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health initiative to increase COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic students and staff, the Upper Canada District School Board will be hosting voluntary COVID-19 testing in some of our schools starting on March 13.

John McAllister
Chair

Stephen Sliwa
Director

This voluntary testing will take place on weekends, by appointment, and be completed by GVT Labs, a third-party licensed service provider for the Ministry of Education.

At this time, testing will only be offered to our students and our school staff who are asymptomatic, and not family members of those individuals.

When testing sites have been identified in your area, you will be contacted via email with dates, times and registration information for your consideration.

As always, we want to thank our UCDSB families for continuing to be diligent with their daily screening and for being understanding as we adjust to the circumstances within our community.

Thank you,
Stephen Sliwa
Director of Education
Upper Canada District School Board