

A Student's Guide to Schooling During COVID-19:

This document is for you, a Student's Guide to schooling during COVID-19. The information below comes from documents from school boards, letters to students, parents and community, and the ministry of Ontario. If your teacher is not aware or inconsistent with these guidelines, you have a few options:

- 1) Always email the teacher (if possible) and put your concerns in writing. If they do not respond, you can resend the email and copy your principal. Your principal's email address can be found by googling your school website.
- 2) If you feel comfortable, include your parent or guardian in the communication as staff have to respond to parent concerns.
- 3) If you are stressed or in need of mental health support you can call:
Kids Help phone: Phone: 1-800-668-6868
Harriet Tubman Youth Support Line 24 hour Response Line - 416-712-0844

Question 1: What if I am not able to complete work at home due to personal reasons?

Your Marks (All Students, K - 12):

Ask each of your teachers for a markbook breakdown of your mark as of March 13, 2020 (see sample email template below). The Ministry of Education and the TDSB have messaged that **student's marks CANNOT go down**. However, it can go up if you submit assignments that are graded HIGHER than your current mark. Take this as an opportunity for stress-free learning.

K-8 Students:

Kindergarten to 8 will be evaluated or graded based on their learning of the expectations in the curriculum **up until** schools closed on March 13, 2020. All students, Kindergarten to Grade 8, will receive a June report card. Teachers can increase the marks if work done during remote learning has shown an increase in achievement.

Secondary or High School Students:

Teachers may assign learning tasks (i.e., assignments, worksheets, online activities), projects and culminating activities. Any work that you decide to submit can be used to increase your final mark. Final marks will be entered in June, and will be based on work done until March 13, 2020, as well as after April 6, 2020 if they **increase** the mark. All subjects a student is taking will be reported on in the June report card.

Question 2: How much work should my teacher be giving me?

As outlined by the Ministry of Education, educators are to re-establish teacher-led learning by grade groupings as follows:

- Kindergarten-Grade 3: five hours of work per student/week (focus on literacy and math)
- Grades 4-6: five hours of work per student/week (focus on literacy, math, science and social studies)
- Grades 7-8: 10 hours of work per student/week (focus on math, literacy, science and social studies)

- Grades 9-12: **three hours of work per course, per week** for semestered students; 1.5 hours of work per course per week for non-semestered students (focus on achieving credits/completion/graduation).

Question 3: What if I do not have a computer/internet access at home?

Schools are working to get laptops and/or devices to students as needed. Email your teacher and/or principal requesting a device. This will be sent to your home. If you do not have internet access, the device will have Wi-Fi, in order to ensure that you can continue learning. There will also be options for you to have paper copies of work and assignments mailed to your home if you need or would prefer.

Question 4: What if my teacher is using texts, books or resources that I do not have?

Teachers should not ask students to use any materials that are not being provided to them while they are at home. All learning materials should be provided to you online or in hard copy. If you do not have the required material, please email your teacher to make them aware. Like in any situation, any issue should be brought to the attention of the vice principal or principal.

Question 5: What if my teacher asks me to use video for class conversations or assignments?

Students are not required to turn on video features during live classes or send in video responses or assignments if they do not feel comfortable. An alternative must be provided to you by your teacher.

Question 6: How should my teacher be communicating with me? How long should it take them to respond to me?

As a professional guideline, the teacher should be responding to your emails within 24-48 hours (Monday to Friday). If you are not aware of how to access your school email, you can request that they email your personal email. They will always communicate with you from their professional email, but you can request they email your personal email address instead of your school email address.

If you prefer, you can ask that the teacher calls you instead. Please request that they call you and send your current phone number. If you prefer they email you and not call you, send your preferred email address and request that they communicate with you through email.

Though educators may be posting content or emailing you outside of the normal instructional day, you are not required to respond to them until you are able to do so.

Question 7: What if I cannot complete work by the due date?

Teachers should continue to be flexible and negotiate timelines with students. Please email your teacher if you need more time to submit work and/or assignments. It is important that these requests are in writing. If you are still experiencing challenges or are not receiving support and understanding, you can email the teacher and principal.

Question 8: What if I missed submitting assignments or quizzes before March Break?

Teachers may allow students to submit assignments or write quizzes that were due prior to March 13 if it will benefit the student's mark. Please ask teachers what assignments have been missed and how you can make them up.

Question 9: What if I need a teacher to talk me through the information because I do not understand?

You should always request additional support in writing to your teacher. If they are unable to provide one-to-one or small group supports, there may be options through guidance. In some cases, other teachers at the school including Special Education teachers, ESL/ELL teachers, Student Success and Guidance may be providing tutoring support. There may also be peer tutoring available. Check out the links below for free tutoring help:

- Western University's Faculty of Education: <https://bit.ly/freecovidtutoring>
- Homework Help: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/tutoring.html>
- Homework Zone - TVO Kids: <https://www.tvokids.com/school-age/homework-zone>
- Brainfuse Tutoring - Toronto Public Library: <https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/detail.jsp?Entt=RDMEDB01938&R=EDB0193>

Question 10: What if I am in grade 12? What happens next?

Mid-term marks will be entered for **Grade 12 students** (only) by April 23, 2020, to meet the deadline to report grades to the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (**OUAC**) and the Ontario College Application Service (**OCAS**). Marks will reflect work done up until March 13, 2020. However, assignments, tests and other graded work done after April 6 **can be used to improve a student's mark** should students demonstrate further achievement of expectations. This information will be updated in June.

The Government of Ontario has made very clear that **no student will have their graduation compromised by COVID-19** and the Ministry of Education continues to work with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to ensure that there will be no barriers to accessing post-secondary education.

Question 11: Can I fail a class that I was passing before the March Break?

No. Right now the goal is to support student achievement and well-being. As stated by the Ministry, the schools will do their best to ensure the successful completion of the school year and to support students to advance to the next school year, earn credits, and graduate.

Question 12: What if I cannot complete my culminating assignment at home?

As stated above, student marks cannot go down after March 13, 2020. Teachers can change the weight of the course assignments so your culminating assignment can be worth 0% instead of 30% if it will negatively impact your grade or put you at risk of failing. Educators know that, "assessments will not be counted if they do not support the overall improvement of achievement of the student or is in the best interest of the student."

Question 13: Can my final mark change if I am doing better during remote learning?

Yes. Final marks will be entered in June, and will be based on work done until March 13, as well as after April 6 with the understanding that assignments, tests and other graded work can only be used for these final marks if it does not lower the mark as of March 13, 2020.

Question 14: If I have an IEP, do I still get my accommodations?

Absolutely. Teachers have to follow your IEPs and ILPs. This means extended time, access to technology, and access to assistive devices that you would usually use in school can be provided to you. You should email your teacher to make sure they are aware of your accommodations, and the teacher and principal if you need access to assistive technology.

Question 15: What if I am in a half course, like Civics/Careers and have not started the other half of the course?

If you are currently in a half course and have not started the second half, you may need to complete new assignments that the teacher sends. Students who do not complete any course work between now and the end of June in these classes only may need to re- take the credits.

Question 16: What if I need my transcript for an application to post-secondary or scholarships?

At this time, Administrators and Guidance Counsellors can produce a PDF of the working copy of a student's transcript. Please email your Principal, VP or Guidance Counsellor.

Question 17: What if I am graduating but have not completed my volunteer hours or passed my literacy test?

The graduation requirement to complete 40 hours of community involvement is suspended for this school year. You do not need to complete this if you have not already.

The graduation requirement for the OSSLT is suspended for this year. If you have not completed the literacy test you will not be required to do so in order to graduate.

Question 18: How will I write exams?

The Ministry has cancelled all exams for this school year. You may still be provided with culminating assignments from your teachers however.

Question 19: I want to email my teachers or principal, but don't know what to say. How should I do this?

Email Message Examples Listed Below:

Telling Your Teacher You Do Not Want To Use Video

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well.

I am not able to participate through video during classes or for assignments. I would still like to communicate with you and my classmates. Is there a different way I can do that?

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

Requesting Your Current Marks

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well.

I would like to know what my mark is in this class, as of March 13 and I would also like to request access to my markbook for the semester/year.

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

Missed Work or Make Up Assignments

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well.

I would like to improve my mark and would like to submit/re-submit [assignment name, quiz, etc].

I read on the ministry site that I should be able to submit or resubmit any missed work, assignments or quizzes. Can you please send me the make-up assignment(s) so I can meet the expectation (improve my mark)?

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

Tip: If you do not hear back from the teacher. Resend the message and cc your principal or vice principal.

Letting teacher know that you are unable to complete work at this time

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well. I would like to let you know that right now I am unable to complete assignments. This pandemic is making it very hard for me to complete school work at this time.

I am hoping that I will be able to complete work soon and will let you know when I am able to.

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

If teacher continues to request work from you after you have informed them that you are not in a position to complete work at this time

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well. I would like to let you know that right now I am unable to complete assignments. This pandemic is making it very hard for me to complete school work at this time.

I am hoping that I will be able to complete work soon and will let you know when I am able to.

In the meantime, please stop sending me assignment reminders or requesting that I submit work during this time. It is causing me to feel anxious and overwhelmed.

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

If a teacher contacts you outside of school hours.

Hi [Teacher's Name]

Hope all is well. I appreciate all that you are doing to provide learning for me online. I only ask that you contact me during school hours. When I receive emails or assignment notifications outside of school hours it makes me feel anxious and overwhelmed.

Thank you for understanding.

Best Regards,
(Your Name)
(Student ID, if you have it)

Questions and answers adapted from:

Remote Learning Questions and Answers. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Remote-Learning/Questions-and-Answers>

TDSB (2020). Supporting Remote Learning and Well-being in the TDSB. Retrieved from <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/docs/SupportingRemoteLearning.pdf>

This guide was drafted by Student Equity Program Advisors Chelsea Takalo & Alana Lowe in partnership with the following community-based organizations:



Emergency Resources for Youth, Parents, Caregivers During COVID-19 Pandemic

YOUTH CRISIS SUPPORT

Harriet Tubman Youth Support Line

Crisis response for African, Caribbean and Black youth people experiencing depression & anxiety, life skills counselling & guidance to support overall wellness information & referral wrap around supports to navigate COVID-19.

24 hour Response Line - 416 - 712 -0844

Monday | 2 - 4pm | 437 - 992 – 0229 Tuesday | 3 - 5pm | 647-703 – 7910
Wednesday | 12 - 2 pm | 647 - 323 – 5349 Thursday | 3 - 5pm | 416 - 316 - 3419
Friday | 12 - 2pm | 647 - 834 - 6992

Kids Help Phone

Kids Help Phone offers counselling, information and referrals and volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French.

Phone: [1-800-668-6868](tel:1-800-668-6868)

Text: Text CONNECT to [686868](tel:686868)

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Canadian Emergency Response Benefit

Taxable Benefit of \$2000/month for ppl that stopped working due to COVID-19

Application: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/apply-for-cerb-with-cra.html>

Additional \$\$ for OW/ODSP recipients who need emergency support due to COVID-19

- Contact your caseworker directly and say you need additional emergency support because of COVID-19. Amounts of \$ vary.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-support-families>

"While schools and child care centres are closed, parents can apply for direct funding to offset the cost of buying materials to support their children's learning, while they practice self-isolation and physical distancing. Eligible parents will receive a one-time per child payment of:

\$200 for children aged 0 to 12

\$250 for children or youth aged 0 to 21 with special needs.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS FOR PARENT WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

"In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we are temporarily expanding the list of eligible expenses under the Special Services at Home program to support people and their families while community-based activities and settings are closed. These changes allow you to use your funding for goods and services that may make it easier for you to stay at home during this time and practise physical distancing."

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/specialneeds/specialservices.aspx>

FOOD BANKS

Black Creek Community Farm & Foodshare (For Jane/Finch residents)

FoodShare and Black Creek Community Farm have partnered to provide emergency relief food boxes — essentially, CSA-style parcels full of fresh fruit and veg — to individuals experiencing unexpected food insecurity. Application for Emergency Food Delivery [here](#).

The Stop Food Bank | 1884 Davenport Road, Toronto, ON M6N 4Y4 | www.thestop.org

- Runs Mondays and Fridays, *12pm-3pm*.
- Takeaway meals on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, *9am-10am for breakfast, 12pm-1pm for lunch*

Food Banks Across the City

EAST

Kennedy/Eglinton - Library | 2380 Eglinton Ave E | Every Tuesday from 2 - 4pm

Warden & Kingston Rd - Taylor Memorial | 1440 Kingston Road | Every Thursday from 2 - 4pm

Agincourt Library | 155 Bonis Ave | Every Friday from 2 - 4pm

Cedarbrae Library | 545 Markham Road | Every Tuesday from 2 - 4pm

WEST

Eatonville Library | 430 Burnhamthorpe Rd | Every Friday from 2 - 4pm

Steeles Library - 375 Bamburgh Cir | Every Friday from 2 - 4pm

Albion Library 1515 Albion Road - by Appointment | Wed & Fri 12 - 3pm call 211

LEGAL ADVICE

Justice for Children & Youth

Justice for Children and Youth provides select legal representation to low-income children and youth in Toronto and vicinity. We are a non-profit legal aid clinic that specializes in protecting the rights of those facing conflicts with the legal system, education, social service or mental health systems. We give summary legal advice, information and assistance to young people, parents (in education matters), professionals and community groups across Ontario.

<https://jfcy.org/en/>

Black Legal Action Centre

Free legal services for low or no income Black residents of Ontario. BLAC is a non-profit community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario. They provide access to justice for low or no income Black residents living in Ontario.

Please note that due to the spread of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), BLAC has altered their service delivery approach until further notice. BLAC will not be accepting any walk-ins or in-person appointments. They will continue to take new inquiries by phone on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 416-597-5831

Toll-free: 1-877-736-9406

Fax: 416-925-3564

Toll-free Fax: 1-844-302-2694

TTY Line: 1-800-855-0511

Mental Health Virtual Resources (Free and paid)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1wX0GKpTv7uzfRSjrtEV7w9H7nGFrqAGSKq8ZENWmwqM>