



ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE SCHOOL

Under the direction of the Basilian Fathers

November 25, 2020

COVID-19, Advent, Holidays, and Assessment

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Good afternoon everyone.

As we approach Advent and the celebration of Christmas, we look forward to embracing a season filled with hope and joy. This update has significant information for all families leading into the Christmas break and the return to classes on January 4, 2021. It includes:

- Current Grey Zone, lockdown, and impact on schools.
- Assessment and evaluation plans for December.
- Potential shift to online learning.
- Family travel and holiday plans.

Grey Zone:

Toronto has been designated a Grey Zone. As of November 23, our region moved into 'lockdown' of non-essential services. Schools will remain open. The guidelines for this Grey Zone can be found at [COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open | Ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/covid-19-response-framework). These new restrictions include no indoor organized public events or social gatherings, except with members of the same household. This current status is in effect for 28 days, equal to two incubation periods of COVID-19. As we have communicated from the beginning, regardless of our comfort level with the pandemic, we do our part to keep everyone safe and well, including ourselves.

School Plans for December and Beyond:

As long as we can keep the school community healthy and well, we will continue with our programming in its current state. The MySMCS Weekly newsletter will continue to keep everyone updated on school activities heading into the Christmas break. Please note the week of December 14 to 18 is a full week of classes and is the last week of Block 2. Final summative assessments will take place this week and many classes will be utilizing in-person class time for this purpose. Please plan accordingly. We anticipate being back to school on January 4 continuing our hybrid approach with Block 1 classes beginning with Cohort A in person.

Online Learning:

There has been some attention given to the idea of shifting to online learning for a period of time as case numbers across the region grow. At this time, we remain committed to staying the course with our model and plan. We will continue to monitor the health of our community and we are prepared to move online if and when necessary. All students and staff should be prepared for a temporary shift to fully online learning at any time during the next few months. Although we have managed well and will continue to be vigilant, we are not immune to the possibility of infection and a school outbreak. All of this information is proactive in preparation to keep the boys connected and engaged in learning during the next stage of the school year.

We continue to develop our ability to improve online learning both synchronously and asynchronously, through staff development, student and parent feedback, and pursuing new ways to teach Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge. Your feedback is always welcome.

Travel and Holiday Plans:

We know this will be a different holiday season than what may be normal. We know we will make the very best of these restricted times and commit to taking care of ourselves and bringing joy to all our loved ones and those in need. The Christmas break is scheduled for two weeks with classes resuming on January 4. **Families are reminded that everyone who returns to Canada from any foreign travel is required to quarantine for 14 days as required under the Quarantine Act.** This requires no close contact with others. Our school nurse, Ms. Natalie Hnidec, has been a good resource for parents with quarantine and symptom management questions. Please remain vigilant over this unique holiday season, enjoy your close family, maybe some truly Canadian winter activity with family, and stay well for everyone's sake.

We are looking forward to Advent and wishing you a Merry Christmas and truly looking forward to a happy and healthy New Year that may see a movement out of the pandemic era. As parents and guardians, you have been the very best in supporting your sons, families, and our community in thriving during these challenging times.

Thank you,

Mr. James McKinnon
Principal

