



*Teresa Lubinski
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To: Regular Board Meeting , August 20, 2020

From: Teresa Lubinski, Trustee Ward 4

Subject: Reconsideration of Non-Medical Mask's (NMM) for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 Students

MOVED BY: Teresa Lubinski, Toronto Catholic District School Board

WHEREAS: In the SickKids' June 17, 2020 report entitled, "COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening" it states on page 3: there is some data to suggest children, particularly those under 10 years of age, may be less susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection and potentially less likely to transmit the virus to others. There is also strong evidence that the majority of children and youth who become infected with SARS-CoV-2 are either asymptomatic or have only mild symptoms, such as cough, fever and sore throat.

WHEREAS: On page 4 the report states: Data from multiple countries suggest that children under 10 years of age are probably less likely to transmit SARS-CoV-2 than older children or adults

WHEREAS: On page 11, the report states: Non-medical masks would need to be worn correctly, which for many otherwise healthy children and youth, will be difficult to do for a full school day; even more significant barriers exist for children and youth with underlying medical, developmental and mental health conditions.

WHEREAS: In the Consensus Guidance Statements of the report,

- 94% of the contributors agreed with the fact that the use of NMMs in the school setting should be driven by local epidemiology with age-specific consideration;
- 78% agreed with the fact: When transmission in the community is low, the use of NMMs throughout the entire school day should not be mandatory for elementary, middle or high school students returning to school. But, NMM use should always be respected if a student chooses to wear one.
- 61% agreed with: given the current epidemiology, the use of NMMs is not recommended for elementary school students.

WHEREAS: The report also states (on page 13):

- If worn incorrectly (e.g. touched frequently, not covering mouth and nose, removed and placed back without proper hand hygiene), NMMs could lead to increased risk and infection.
- It is impractical to expect most children and youth to wear a NMM properly for the duration of the school day. Elementary school-aged children, in particular, would need assistance to follow appropriate procedures for putting on and taking off the NMM (e.g. during meal times, snack times). In addition, during these times when the NMM is removed, the NMM would need to be stored appropriately to prevent infection spread.
- Studies have shown that it is difficult for health-care workers to wear a mask for prolonged periods in the hospital setting and it is therefore anticipated that it would be difficult for children as well.
- The NMM may not be tolerated by certain populations with underlying conditions (e.g. asthma, allergies, neurodevelopmental disorders, mental health challenges and especially during warm/humid weather conditions).

- The addition of NMMs may increase anxiety, interfere with the therapeutic learning environment and increase inattention or distraction in children and youth, particularly for those who may already struggle with attentions, such as ADHD or other developmental disorders.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The TCDSB follow the Sick Kids Recommendations for Re-Opening in respect to NMMs for elementary students in JK to Grade 3.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Trustees approve that the wearing of NMM's are not required for elementary students from JK to Grade 3.

Teresa Lubinski
Trustee, Ward 4