



Media Release

For Immediate Release

March 14, 2021

COVID-19 Outbreak Declared at Walter Gretzky Elementary School

Brantford, Ont. – Today, the Brant County Health Unit declared a COVID-19 outbreak at Walter Gretzky Elementary School in Brantford.

As outlined in the Ministry of Education's [Operational Guidance](#), an outbreak is defined as two or more lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in students and/or staff in a school with an epidemiological link, within a 14-day period, where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the school.

News of the second COVID-19 case at Walter Gretzky came on March 14. The first case was identified on March 12. Walter Gretzky has about 450 students in Kindergarten through Grade 8.

Understandably, for privacy reasons, the identity of these COVID-19 cases will not be disclosed. These individuals have been directed by the health unit to [self-isolate](#), along with any family members who reside in the same household.

Upon receiving this news, Grand Erie immediately shared the contact information of the students and staff initially identified by the health unit as close contacts to these COVID-19 cases. Within the next 24-48 hours, the Brant County Health Unit will be in contact with these individuals as they work through their contact tracing. The health unit will provide further direction and next steps to these individuals, including confirmation of their isolation period. If additional students or staff are impacted, the Brant County Health Unit will advise as soon as possible.

A close contact includes any students or staff in the impacted cohort(s), but may also include others. Grand Erie provided the health unit with class lists, transportation records and child care information.

Walter Gretzky remains open for those students and staff not required to [self-isolate](#). Grand Erie custodians continue to complete their disinfecting of schools each night.

“Our priority is always the health and well-being of our students and staff,” said JoAnna Roberto, Director of Education. “As we move forward together, we’ll continue to work in partnership with public health. We’re confident in the preventative measures we’ve taken to deal with COVID-19 as well as the protocols we have in place to quickly identify and respond to cases.”

Walter Gretzky staff will work with students and families to ensure learning continues for those required to [self-isolate](#). The school's outbreak will be closely monitored and reported on by the Brant County Health Unit.

Grand Erie District School Board represents nearly 18,000 students in 58 elementary schools and more than 7,500 students in 14 secondary schools within the city of Brantford and the counties of Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk as well as students from Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

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