



August 18, 2020

Dear **CDSBEO Elementary School Families**,

As we prepare for the reopening of our schools, we have kept the safety of our students at the forefront of all our decisions. Because of that, we are reaching out to let you know that all elementary schools in Cornwall will experience a change to the timing of the start and/or end of the school day, otherwise known as bell times, effective September 2020. This change is crucial in ensuring we can continue to provide transportation for our Cornwall and surrounding area families both in elementary and secondary.

The CDSBEO recently posted its School Re-Entry Plan for September 2020. The Ministry of Education has indicated that CDSBEO must plan accordingly, in light of COVID-19, and be able to seamlessly transition between the two adaptive curriculum delivery scenarios that have been approved by the Ministry of Education (Scenario 2 and Scenario 3) as identified in CDSBEO's School Re-Entry Plan accessible at: <https://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/cdsbeo-re-entry-plan/>. This change of bell times will allow us to move seamlessly between adaptive delivery models when necessary.

This change was originally scheduled to take place in September 2021 but is being advanced one year to avoid the disruption of transportation services to eligible families during the 2020-21 school year and to continue to ensure transportation for all of our students 5 days a week throughout this pandemic.

This change will also facilitate a standard length of the school day and will affect bus pickup and drop off schedules for schools in the South region – Cornwall and surrounding area of the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario's (CDSBEO's) jurisdiction.

For Cornwall and surrounding area elementary schools the bell time change moving forward will be as follows:

| September 2020 Start Time | September 2020 End Time |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9:15 a.m.- 9:30 a.m. | 3:35 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. |

Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO), in partnership with CDSBEO, has been aligning bus scheduling to reflect these bell times across the entire region of service, to create consistent 8:00 a.m. start times for secondary schools and start times for elementary schools between 9:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Bell time alignment supports consistent planning for families, the implementation of district-wide learning opportunities and significant transportation related savings, without loss of service to families. For additional information on bell time changes recently implemented in other areas of the CDSBEO, please visit: www.steo.ca/belltimechanges

Changing Childcare Needs

STEO and the school board recognize that changes to bell times may require families to make use of before-and-after school care services that they did not require in the past. To address these concerns, the board is actively working with parents and childcare operators to assess the need for additional support and therefore, they require your input.

Changes to Childcare (for schools offering JK-6 programming)

A survey for parents concerning their need for childcare services has been aligned with this notice of bell time changes to allow parents to consider their own needs in light of the anticipated changes.

The information parents provide to this childcare survey is critically important to helping childcare operators to properly assess demand and plan accordingly for resources in the new school year. Please complete the survey, which is located at www.steo.ca/belltimechanges by August 26th, 2020. For support in accessing or completing the survey contact **1-800-443-4562 ext: 3112**.

Parents who have questions about existing before-and-after school programming or childcare opportunities can also reach out to their school Principal, or directly to the childcare operator, who will provide the appropriate resources.

Some families may be eligible for financial assistance for their childcare needs through the municipality. Parents can learn if they are eligible for the assistance program by visiting the following website:

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| Counties of SD&G and the City of Cornwall | https://www.cornwall.ca/en/live-here/child-care.aspx |
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Information Resources and Sessions

STEO and the CDSBEO are offering an interactive parent information session on August 26, 2020, 6pm to 7pm, to address questions. With COVID-19 safety measures in mind, this session will be offered through a virtual platform and will require pre-registration. Please visit: www.steo.ca/belltimechanges to register for the session. A recorded session will be made available at www.steo.ca/belltimechanges for those who are unable to participate.

Staying Connected and Ready for School Start up

In order to be ready for September, we encourage CDSBEO parents to confirm that their contact information on file at the school is correct in order to receive information through School Messenger. Parents can also download the free STEO BusPlanner Delays App to their mobile phone to receive direct notifications specific to their child's school.

SCHOOL and TRANSPORTATION
ELIGIBILITY

Parents can visit STEO's website at www.steo.ca and click on the icon to verify your child's eligibility for busing.



Detailed student transportation information, including pick-up/drop-off locations and approximate times, will be available **by the end of August 2020** using the FIND MY BUS STOP tool on STEO's website.

Please don't hesitate to contact STEO at 1-855-925-0022 or transportation@steo.ca for any clarification you may require as relates to transportation.

Wishing you the very best,
STEO and CDSBEO