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## Board asks parents if they want back to school in

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# person, or online once again for fall

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With planning for the 2021-2022 school year in full swing at the Trillium Lakelands District School Board, parents are being asked whether they would like their students in brick and mortar schools or virtual classrooms for the upcoming school year.

Those decisions will go a long way to determining staffing and structures for 2021-2022.

Wes Hahn, director of education, said “Funding for *Learn at Home* will not be what it was this year. If parents select *Learn at Home* next year they need to understand that kids will not be able to move back and forth like they did this year. We want to get staffing settled as soon as we can.”

Trustee John Byrne questioned the efficacy of parents making a decision about which option their children will select in early June before a possible fourth wave of COVID arrives this summer. Byrne asked if there will be flexibility for student movement if such a thing happens.

“We will have to take a look at that with public health come summer,” Hahn replied.

Trustee Byrne wanted more clarity on the issue of *Learn at Home* and asked what would be the minimum number of students required to offer the complete virtual

elementary and secondary experience that was available this year.

“We know the number of students doing *Learn at Home* will be lower than this year. We will do the best with the money that we have,” Hahn said.

Haliburton area trustee Gary Brohman wanted to know how brick and mortar schools are going to operate in the fall and how they are going to be timetabled.

Hahn shared, “There will be cohorting, although not as intensively as it is being done now. PPE usage and cleaning protocols will remain. We are expecting the octoblock or quadmester models to receive serious consideration again next fall. We need so see how many students we will be dealing with. We had flexibility last fall for different kinds of programming. We will not have that money next fall.”

Hahn also said more vaccines are becoming available with every passing week.

“We are looking to September and we hope that most or all staff will be vaccinated. We hope by September most of the people in the community will have at least one dose of vaccine. There is now the potential for students to be vaccinated. I think late August will look very different than where we are right now.”

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