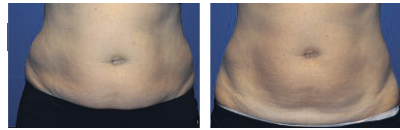




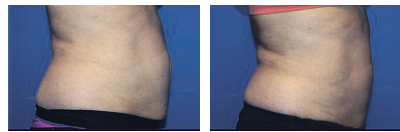
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Individual results may vary and are not guaranteed. Model for illustrative purposes only.

AMP-3879

## NEWS

# WATER TESTING AND 'HIGH ANXIETY' COVID-19 CONCERNS: HDSB MEETING

Following are the highlights of the most recent Halton District School Board meeting.

- The high number of students switching between in-person and virtual learning will affect more than half of the board's elementary schools.

The complex reorganization required has prompted the board to close all elementary schools on Nov. 30, giving teachers the opportunity to reach out to new students before classes resume Dec. 1.

- "I certainly appreciate the challenges this puts on the community and parents ... but I think in the difficult circumstances we are in, the number of months students have spent with specific teachers, the already high anxiety level around COVID, the increasing numbers, this we believe strongly, will support the transition of our students," said director of education, Stuart Miller.

- Although the minister of education has ruled out an extension of the winter break and school closures — "we can never say never" — "we are ready to pivot if we have to pivot," said Miller.

- In 2020 water testing results, 17 schools had one or more fixtures which exceeded the lead concentration standard as outlined in the Safe Drinking Water Act. Those schools are Abbey Park HS, Gary Allan (Georgetown and Burlington), Iroquois Ridge HS, Robert Bateman HS White Oaks HS (north and south), TA Blakelock HS, Aldershot HS, Georgetown DHS,



Torstar file photo

Elementary students will be off Nov. 30 as the HDSB reorganizes its in-person and virtual classrooms, due to the high number of switches.

Acton DHS, Milton DHS, Munn's PS, Maplehurst PS, Pauline Johnson PS, W.I. Dick PS, Pineview PS.

- Fixtures are sink taps, drinking fountains or water-bottle-filling stations. Fixtures that are not designated for drinking purposes, such as found in auto shops, are not tested.

- When testing water for lead, two samples are taken: one is a standing sample taken directly from the fixture without running the water first; the other a flushed sample taken after running the tap for five minutes and letting the water sit.

- Should a sample have a lead concentration and the flushed sample be below the threshold, regulations require staff to perform five-minute daily flushes of every water line and a 10-second flush at every fixture used for drinking wa-

ter or food preparation. Ministry of Environment regulations require that flushing be continued for two years.

- If the flushed sample is above the ministry's threshold of 10 micrograms per litre, the water supply to the fixture is shut off and the fixture is covered to prevent usage until a retest or replacement confirms the lead levels are within acceptable amounts.

- To improve indoor air quality in HDSB schools, using the technical standards as outlined in the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers, the board's ventilation plan includes the operation of ventilation systems for longer periods of time, inspecting, maintaining and changing filters and ensuring the highest rated filter is being utilized.

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