As we Return To School, reimagining what school looks like is important. Taking advantage of outdoor spaces will be key, as we have heard from health experts that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is lower in the outdoors. It is time to reconsider the school grounds and local communities as extensions of the classroom, which allows for physical distancing to happen more naturally, and as a powerful approach to build creative, analytical, social and physical skills – all tied to the curriculum.

Please note that significant investments in local school grounds are not required to do this work! Every space will look different, so take advantage of what is already available to you. It is important to communicate to families the expectation that students will spend more time outside and ensure the 511H: Walking Excursion Form – Immediate Community is completed so that the natural environment can be used to support safe student learning in the Return to School.

The Outdoor Education department is here to support local school staff in brainstorming about how to use existing school grounds and nearby green spaces to support physical distancing, and to increase opportunities for experiential hands-on learning in natural environments.

To support you:

1. TOES staff will be a resource available to support teachers in fostering outdoor learning in local spaces. Click Here for some strategies to help you get started.

2. TOES will be prepared to offer excursions in the fall. These excursions will be available at our sites, in local school communities using the school grounds and local green spaces and virtually as supported by TPH. Click Here for a list of programs that are available. The current focus is grades 2, 4 and 6, in addition to NAC10 and SHSM at the secondary level. A NEW application has been created to book trips and will be released shortly. Information will be communicated through Direct Line and System Leaders Weekly Bulletin.

3. A "Learn From Home" resource. There are currently 88 activities to support students, families and teachers to encourage connecting to the natural world given our unique and individual access at this time, all with COVID restrictions in mind. This resource is linked on both internal and external websites, on all the OE websites, as well as through the Virtual Library to support both in-class and remote learning.

4. Review our **Get Outside Month** resource! Click Here to access over 150 curriculum connected lessons that have been created IN, OF and ABOUT our environment. Themes include:
    - Climate Change
    - Indigenous Ways of Knowing
    - Literacy
    - Numeracy
    - Social and World Studies
    - STE(A)M
    - Well Being

5. TOES staff will be available weekly through "Virtual Office Hours". These will be published regularly through Direct Line and System Leaders Weekly.

For more information visit our website at schools.tsdb.on.ca/toes or email toes@tdsb.on.ca.