

## **FAQs – Return to In-Class Instruction**

On May 15, 2020, the provincial government announced that parents will have the choice of bringing their child(ren) back to class on a part-time basis starting June 1. The transition to in-class instruction is a voluntary option for families. Remote/online learning will continue however, it will be at a reduced level as teachers balance in-class instruction with remote teaching.

The Ministry of Education’s approach for resuming in-class instruction is guided by health and safety guidelines, measures, protocols and orders, as well as the four guiding principles developed for continuity of learning during the pandemic:

- a) Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
- b) Provide the services needed to support children of our essential workers.
- c) Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
- d) Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

## **What are some measures that will be implemented to support the health and safety of students and staff?**

All schools will follow the guidance of the Provincial Health Officer. The following strategies will be implemented:

- Students will have designated desks and will need to use their own supplies.
- Desks will be separated to maintain two metres physical distance.
- Students will be organized into smaller groups so that they stay together throughout the day.
- Staffing assignments will minimize the number of different teachers and support staff that interact with groups of students throughout the day.
- The flow of people in hallways and bathrooms will be managed to minimize contact and maintain physical distance, and to prevent students from gathering in groups.
- Cleaning of high-touch surfaces like door knobs, toilet seats, keyboards and desks will occur at least twice a day, and school buildings will be cleaned at least once a day.
- Students, educators and staff will be required to wash/sanitize their hands upon entering school and throughout the day.
- The school is well-stocked with hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies.
- Assemblies and other school-wide events will be held virtually.
- Staggered start and end times may be introduced.
- Recess and lunch times may be changed to allow for physical distancing.
- There will be increased outside time, including snack time, place-based learning and unstructured time, but no physical contact sports.
- School playground equipment will re-open on June 1.
- Children will not be permitted to share food or personal items like phones, pens or pencils.
- Water fountains will be shut off, so please ensure your children bring sufficient water for the day.

- There will be regular verbal reminders for children to minimize physical contact with their friends (avoid close greetings such as hugs, high-fives, handshakes and keep their hands to themselves), to wash their hands frequently and use appropriate respiratory etiquette.
- Health and safety signage to remind children and staff to wash their hands, maintain physical distancing and practice appropriate respiratory etiquette will be displayed throughout the school.
- Staff will be required to stay home if they have symptoms of a common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or any other infectious disease.
- Parents will be asked to assess their children daily and to keep them home if they feel ill or have any symptoms of a common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or any other infectious disease.
- If any student or staff member has even mild symptoms, arrangements will be made for that person to be returned home.
- Consistent with direction from the Provincial Health Officer, access to the school is restricted to staff and students only. Parents will be required to remain outside the school.
- Only one student per seat will be permitted on school buses, unless children are from the same household.

Please note: School districts follow the direction of the Provincial Health Officer. As new guidance is issued, there may be additions or changes to the above measures.

### **Will students go through screening measures when arriving at schools?**

Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. Children who show any signs of illness should stay at home and parents must notify the school. Staff and students who are ill will not be permitted to attend school.

All students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19, or travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days, or were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate, including children of essential service workers who are ill.

If you are unsure if your child should self-isolate, use the [BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#), contact 8-1-1, or the local public health unit to seek further advice. Families can also contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases. Public Health will advise families on appropriate protocols with respect to a student who has been in contact with someone who may have COVID-19.

Provincial Health Office guidelines indicate schools do not have any role in screening students or staff for symptoms, checking temperatures or COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals.

### **Will children and staff wear masks?**

According to the guidelines provided by the Provincial Health Officer, there is no need for staff or students to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). For those who choose to wear their own equipment, such as masks,

their choice will be respected.

### **What measures are in place to ensure schools are disinfected?**

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Schools will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the [BC Centre for Disease Control's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document.

This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once a day.
- Frequently touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day.
- Limiting items that are not easily cleaned (e.g. fabric or soft items).
- Emptying garbage containers daily.

### **How will textbooks and other school supplies be cleaned?**

According to the Provincial Health Office guidelines, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

### **What is the schedule for in-class instruction?**

Principals will be developing schedules and will be in contact with parents directly.

### **Will my child's learning suffer if they do not attend?**

Remote/online learning will continue however, it will be at a reduced level as teachers balance in-class instruction with remote teaching. Students who attend school will be able to get more direct teacher support for their remote learning assignments. Teachers will aim to be as equitable as possible given the guidelines they are working under, but not every child's experience will be the same.

### **If my child attends in-person, will they also be expected to complete assignments and work from home?**

Teachers will continue to plan lessons and provide learning opportunities for students whether they attend in-person or online.

### **Will my child have the same teacher as they did before?**

Efforts will be made to keep students with their usual teacher. However, this may not be possible for every class. Staffing decisions will be made in consideration of the health and safety of students and staff.



**I am an essential services worker. What support is available for my child?**

The announcement to resume in-class instruction on a part-time basis by the government provides for up to 100 per cent in-class support at school for Tier 1 and Tier 2 Essential Service Workers.

**My child has special needs and a ministry designation. How will their learning be supported?**

Children with diverse learning needs will continue to be supported in their learning. As such, they may have an opportunity to attend school each day, continue learning remotely or a combination of both. Planning is currently underway to determine schedules and supports for in-class learning. As details are worked out, school staff will be in contact with families of students with diverse learning needs who may benefit from additional in-class support.

**Will there be before- and after-school care available?**

Before and after-school care may be available through regular private program providers. If a program was offered at your child's school, it may continue to operate. Please contact the childcare provider directly for more information.

**Is there childcare for younger children, not enrolled in schools?**

Childcare providers that operate on school property may continue to operate. Please contact the childcare provider directly for more details.

**How will students' marks be impacted if they attend versus if they continue with remote learning?**

Students will receive marks based on their learning progress regardless if they attend in-class instruction on a part-time basis or continue to learn remotely.

**Will students be able to use playgrounds or play sports?**

School playgrounds will re-open starting June 1. Guidelines issued by the Provincial Health Office do not prohibit playground time nor sports. However, to minimize physical contact, these activities may be limited. Students may instead have more unstructured play or place-based learning.

**Will there be field trips for students?**

Unfortunately, field trips will not take place for the remainder of the school year. However, increased time outdoors will be incorporated into the school day.