

February 25, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter provides important information on the Daily Health Check, a COVID-19 exposure involving a variant at Hellings Elementary earlier this month, and the requirement to avoid crowding on school grounds.

Daily Health Check

Parents and caregivers are required to perform a daily health check with their child(ren) at home prior to attending school. Recently, the BC Centre for Disease Control introduced a new online K-12 Health Check as well as a mobile app. You can access the health check in several ways:

- Visit the BC Government's [K-12 Health Check website](#)
- Download the mobile App to your phone via Google Play or Apple's App Store
- Access the school district's form [here](#) (revised February 2021)

Please take the time to review this health check with your child every day before coming to school.

COVID-19 Variant

Last weekend, we received information from Fraser Health that a COVID-19 exposure at Hellings Elementary from February 2 – 4 involved a variant of concern. Families and staff at the school received notification of this exposure on February 9. However, testing for the variant takes longer than standard COVID-19 testing which is why we received this additional information later. It appears that no further cases have resulted from that case as more than 14 days have passed since the last date of exposure.

We recognize that the presence of a COVID-19 variant in one of our schools is concerning news. Please rest assured that staff and students at all schools will continue to practice a comprehensive suite of health and safety measures to help protect themselves, each other, their families and the wider community from the risk of COVID-19.

We encourage you to continue to follow the [BC Centre for Disease Control's measures](#) to stay healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Please stay at home and keep a safe distance from people in your household when you have COVID, cold or flu-like symptoms. Please refer to the updated [Daily Health Check](#).
- Socialize only with those in your household.
- Connect with people you do not live with by phone or by video call.
- Wear masks in indoor public places.
- Practice good hygiene, including:
 - Regular hand washing/sanitizing
 - Avoiding touching your face
 - Covering coughs and sneezes
 - Disinfecting frequently touched surfaces

We encourage you to keep your child at home if they feel unwell. Staying at home when unwell is the most important step we can take to keep COVID-19 out of our schools. [Click here](#) to review the BCCDC's advice on when to get tested for COVID-19.

Gathering on School Grounds

Recent updates to the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) require that *"Parents/caregivers and other visitors should maintain physical distance and avoid crowding while on school grounds, including outside."*

With so many people present during school drop-off and pick up, the risk of people coming into close contact with others is very high. As the weather starts to improve over the coming weeks and months, we know there will be greater temptation for people to stop and socialize during these times. However, we encourage you to leave the school grounds promptly and to avoid interacting with others outside your household, including letting your children play with others from outside their cohort in the playground. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any health questions or concerns, please call the Fraser Health COVID-19 Call Centre at 604-918-7532.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Doug Sheppard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doug Sheppard
Superintendent of Schools