

August 27, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On Tuesday, August 24, the Provincial Government shared updated [health and safety guidelines](#) aimed at keeping schools safe and open during the 2021/2022 school year. The Delta School District is currently reviewing these guidelines with respect to our previous plans and will have an updated district safety plan that will be shared on our [website](#) prior to the start of school on September 7.

With the B.C. population highly immunized, there is now greater community protection against COVID-19 and, as a result, schools can return to closer-to-normal operations with students back in class full-time in September. However, there will continue to be communicable disease prevention measures in place. Many of the health and safety measures that were in place at the end of the school year in June will still be in place when schools open their doors on Tuesday, September 7.

Please find below a brief explanation of the provincial updates announced earlier this week. Your school will also provide you with additional site-specific information in the coming days. As we experienced last year, we expect that Provincial and Fraser Health will continue to monitor and adjust safety guidelines to meet community and school needs.

Health and Safety Measures For the Return to School

- Students and staff will be required to complete **daily health checks** and **to stay home when they feel sick**
- The mask mandate will remain in place to start this school year. All K-12 staff and visitors, and students in grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear masks indoors in schools and on school buses
- K-3 students will be encouraged to wear masks indoors
- Students and staff will be required to practice diligent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Frequently touched services will be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day, and when visibly dirty
- School districts will ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated and maintained to their standards and specifications so they continue to work properly

Changes for the 2021/22 School Year

- Students will no longer be organized into cohorts/learning groups
- Physical distancing of 2 metres is no longer recommended, however schools can continue to use strategies to create space between people, for example, spreading out students, using virtual options for gatherings, staggering transitions to recess and lunch breaks, taking students outside more often and managing the flow of people in common areas including at pick up and drop off times
- Sports, music and other extra-curricular activities may resume in alignment with Public Health Orders
- Gatherings and events can occur in alignment with Public Health Orders
- Community use of school district facilities may resume
- Health authorities will have the ability to introduce additional regional health measures specific to individual schools, groups of schools or entire school districts where community transmission rates are higher

For more detailed information, we encourage you to visit the following online resources:

- [COVID-19 Safe Schools website](#)
- [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12](#)
- [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
- [B.C.'s K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#)

As mentioned by the Provincial Government earlier this week, vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. Currently, the Delta community has the highest COVID-19 vaccination rate in the Fraser Health region, with 89% of people aged 12 and over having received one dose and 82% being fully vaccinated. We would like to express our thanks to the community for rolling up their sleeves to help stop the spread of COVID-19. If you or your child(ren) are eligible but haven't yet received your vaccine, we encourage you to get fully vaccinated to further lower the risk in our community. You can find information on where to get vaccinated [here](#).

While COVID-19 is present in our communities, we anticipate there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools. However, according to the BCCDC, with most people 12 and older immunized and effective prevention measures in place, exposures are less likely to lead to further transmission.

Supporting the health and well-being of students, families and staff remains our top priority, and we will continue to work with our partners at Fraser Health to review our local context

and planning. As we move into the new school year, we will be identifying and addressing pandemic impacts on student learning and well-being, with a focus on literacy, numeracy, social-emotional development and mental health. If you feel your child(ren) need additional support, please contact your school principal or the Superintendent's Office.

We look forward to welcoming your child(ren) back to school in September and continuing to deliver our vision of helping all learners to succeed and contribute their full potential to the future.

Sincerely,



Doug Sheppard
Superintendent of Schools