

January 9th, 2021



Dear Parents/Guardians:

You will have now received information from your school principal regarding our much-anticipated return to school. Thank you for your patience during this past week. I would like to draw your attention to our process in the event that we have too many staff absences for normal school operations, our continued focus on safety measure in our schools, and some changes to the way Provincial Health is handling notifications of positive cases and self-management expectations.

School Closure Due to Staff Absence

During the past week, our staff met to review safety plans, and to prepare learning materials that may be required in the event of extended student and staff absences. We will be monitoring absences on a daily basis to ensure that we have staff to run regular classes. If we do not have adequate staff to maintain regular school operations, you will receive notice via email directly from me, and we will move to remote and other program learning options until staff are available. This would be effective the following school day as we do not expect to end a school day early due to lack of staff.

Indoor Safety and Hygiene Measures

We know from Provincial Health that mask use is an effective safety measure that enhances personal safety, and the safety of others. Principals will continue to work with students (and parents/guardians) who are not able to tolerate masks for extended indoor periods and focus on other measures including frequent hand hygiene and avoiding face to face and close personal contact.

In addition, staff have developed routines that will help to reduce crowding and make use of extra spaces with as little impact on our 'normal' (interesting and engaging 😊) school day as possible.

Provincial Health Office (PHO) Information

Below is information from the PHO signalling a change in the way contact tracing and follow up is being conducted based on the behavior of the most recent Covid variant.

Public health guidance recommends those who [test positive for COVID-19](#) notify those whom they live with, or whom they've had close contact with. While those who test positive do not need to notify the school or others at school, individuals may still contact the school for this purpose. To protect personal privacy, schools cannot release individual contact information for the purpose of an individual (staff, student, or parent/caregiver) seeking to notifying others of their test result.

Health check tools are being updated to reflect the variant changes. You can refer to the daily health check before you come to school by using our health check form (attached) or the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).

All of our safety plans, the daily health check form, and other related documents are located on our website at www.sd19.bc.ca

Thank you for your patience and support as we work to keep our schools open, and our students healthy, happy, and engaged.

As always, I welcome your questions, concerns, and ideas.

Take Care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Hooker', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mike Hooker
Superintendent of Schools