



EDUCATION 2020 RE-START PLAN: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What if my child or someone living in my household is immune suppressed?

If your child (or someone in your household) is immune suppressed as defined by the [BCCDC's Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) and Children with Immune Suppression, a learning plan that meets your child's individual needs will be available.

By definition "immune suppression means that your child's immune system is weakened by medications or a medical condition. A weakened immune system may not be able to protect as well from infection." Our District will have a process in place to accommodate these students. As part of the process, please be prepared to do the following:

- Consult with your child's medical health provider (pediatrician, specialist) to determine the level of risk regarding your child going back to in-class instruction at their current school. Your child's doctor will be able to provide guidance on whether your child can safely attend school and what the best safety plan is for your child.
- Obtain a letter from your medical health provider indicating recommended guidelines for the school setting, or if school attendance is not recommended, a letter indicating the need for an accommodated at-home learning program supported by the District.
- Contact your child's school administrator to discuss a learning plan for your child.
- Further guidance from the BCCDC can be found in [BCCDC Guidance for Families of Immunocompromised Children in School and Group Gatherings](#)

2. What if a student or staff member is found to be a confirmed case of COVID-19 at my child's school?

If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, the Interior Health Authority will do an investigation to confirm if any staff or students have been in close contact with that person and need to self-isolate. The health authority will inform the school and the District if there are close contacts of a confirmed case within a Learning Group or school. The District will take direction from the health authority regarding operations and communications.



3. Is the return to school mandatory? Will there still be online instruction available for those who do not wish to return to school?

In Stage 2, as is currently outlined by the provincial authorities, all students are expected to return to school. Distance Learning may be available. Parents and guardians should contact their regular school principal to discuss program options.

4. What are the options for parents in sending their children to school?

The hybrid model of in-class instruction and remote learning that was offered in June will not be available this fall. Parents have the option to send children to in-class instruction or they can choose Online and Distributed Learning. Online and Distributed Learning provides the BC Curriculum to students with a BC certified teacher in an online format. A third option is homeschooling, which is usually provided by a family member and this does not provide an option for a BC Certificate of Graduation or a “Dogwood Diploma”.

Parents and guardians who are considering moving their children to Online and Distributed Learning or homeschooling are asked to contact their school principal.

5. Is there going to be extra help for children with special needs? How is it going to be delivered? Will there be more support staff?

In school supports for students with IEPs will resume with some adaptations for safety precautions. Parents are encouraged to connect with their school teams to discuss any questions regarding the return to school and how their child’s IEP will be supported this year.

6. Can you tell us more about the HVAC systems in schools?

Fresh air ventilation rates will be increased at all of our District sites to bring in more outdoor air and allow for less recirculation air within the educational space. Air filters on all HVAC systems will be replaced on a regular basis to prevent buildup of particulate on filter media ensuring the increased ventilation rates.



7. Will there be a mask requirement?

Masks will be required for staff, middle and secondary students in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.

The Provincial Health Officer does not recommend mask for elementary children. More information is available [here](#).

8. Will schools be providing students, at a minimum, with two surgical masks a day, and provide them with proper instructions for using them?

Each student will be provided with two reusable, non-medical masks. Additional disposable non-medical masks will be available on an as-needed basis. Students will receive health and safety instructions during the orientation week.

9. What about busing for those students that are already registered to ride the bus?

Where possible buses will be loaded to allow for physical distancing. When buses are loaded past the limits of physical distancing, students (Grades 6 to 12) will be required to wear a non-medical mask. Buses will be loaded from back to front to limit the possible spread of contaminants between students. Manifests of students will be maintained for all school buses and seating plans, where possible, and maintained for contact tracing should it become necessary.

Bus drivers will be provided with a face mask, face shield and hand sanitizer to protect themselves as the students load and unload. Cleaning and disinfecting will occur twice a day; after the morning and afternoon runs as per the CDC's guidelines.

10. Will extracurricular activities be curtailed or cancelled?

Activities in middle and secondary schools including sports, arts (including band and choir) or special interest clubs can occur if physical distance can be maintained between members of different learning groups, and reduced physical contact can be practiced by those within the same learning group.

Inter-school events like competitions, tournaments and festivals will not occur at this time.

11. How will you maintain physical distancing?

Schools may use 'spread out and stagger' approaches to provide physical distance between students and staff:



- Different classroom and learning environment configurations, like desk and table formations
- Increased spacing between students in classrooms
- Staggered recess/break, lunch and class transition times
- Increased outside time for students
- More individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff
- Limitations on assemblies and other large gatherings

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) advises that staff and students in a learning group do not need to physically distance from each other, but that minimizing physical contact is still important and encouraged. Staff and students should continue to practice physical distancing if they are interacting with people outside of their learning group, or if they are not part of a learning group. Schools should focus on how students and staff can move around safely.

12. Can our school meal program continue?

While we provided food hampers when students were not in schools last spring, this fall our focus will return to providing breakfast programs within our school buildings. The Starfish backpack and Penny Lane backpack programs will continue as well.

13. What is the planned schedule for the first two weeks of kindergarten? Can we consider half-days for Kindergarten students?

Kindergarten students have a gradual entry for the first week, which consists of students coming in smaller groups for a shorter duration. Kindergarten students will be required to attend for full days in accordance with the School Act.

14. What are my responsibilities as a parent regarding daily health checks?

Parents and care givers are asked to complete a daily health check with students prior to sending them to school:

1. Does your child have any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever
 - Cough or worsening of chronic cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat
 - Runny nose / stuffy nose
 - Loss of sense of smell or taste
 - Headache
 - Fatigue
 - Diarrhea



- Loss of appetite
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Muscle aches
 - Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
 - Dizziness, confusion
 - Abdominal pain
 - Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes
2. Have you or anyone in your household returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?
 3. Are you or is anyone in your household a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?

If you answered “YES” to any of the questions and the symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should NOT come to school. If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health-care provider for further assessment. This includes 8- 1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner. If you answered “YES” to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.

15. What if someone in my household has COVID symptoms but I don't?

You can still come into school if someone in your household has cold, influenza or COVID- 19-like symptoms, provided you are not sick. It is expected that the person with symptoms is seeking assessment to see whether they have COVID-19.

If that person is confirmed to have COVID-19 and you are identified as a close contact, you must stay home and self-isolate.

16. What if my child has allergies?

People who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms due to an existing health condition can still go to school when they are experiencing these symptoms, as long as the symptoms are occurring as they typically do.

If there is a change in severity of the symptoms, however, the province says it is advisable to seek advice from a health-care provider and consider staying at home or keeping your child at home.



17. What happens if someone develops COVID symptoms at school?

If someone develops COVID symptoms at school, they will be given a mask and isolated away from their classmates and colleagues.

Parents/guardians will be contacted. They will be asked to pick up their child as soon as possible after notification.

Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).

The school will immediately inform public health of the potential case.

The student/staff member should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider for COVID-19 and their symptoms have resolved.

18. What happens if someone in my learning group has COVID-19?

If there is a confirmed COVID-19 case within a learning group, public health will reach out and identify any potential further cases. They will get in touch with close contacts and recommend 14-day isolation if necessary. They will continue to provide follow-up recommendations as necessary.

Schools and public health officials will decide whether or not to suspend in-class learning.

Any students who are required to self-isolate will get learning support from their school.