



May 15, 2020

Dear parents/guardians,

Earlier today, Premier John Horgan and Education Minister Rob Fleming confirmed that optional in-class instruction for K-12 students will resume on June 1. We have received specific health and safety protocols and direction from the ministry and provincial public health that we will be adhering to as our schools resume in-class instruction.

Our school district is now developing its return-to-class plan which all school districts are required to develop and have approved by the ministry. Before students return on June 1, we will make this plan and the protocols publicly available on the district website. In the meantime, we can share that the health and safety protocols include requirements, such as:

- Desks spaced apart and avoiding large groups or gatherings of students in hallways or other common areas;
- Regular cleaning of high-contact surfaces like doorknobs, toilet seats, keyboards and desks at least twice a day, and cleaning of the school building at least once a day;
- Students, educators and staff will be required to clean their hands before entering school property, and there will be more hand-sanitizing and cleaning stations available, with well-stocked supplies;
- staggered drop-offs, lunch and recess breaks, with increased outside time;
- staff and students (or their parents/guardians) must assess themselves daily for symptoms of COVID-19. If any student or staff member has even mild symptoms, arrangements will be made for that person to be returned home;
- one student per seat on school buses, unless children are from the same house, with plexiglass separating the bus driver from students; and
- students or employees should not share food or personal items like phones, pens or pencils. Clear protocols also need to be in place for the safe and healthy handling of all food items.

The number of students in school each day will be reduced to make sure that schools are safe for students and staff. For K-5 students, this means that students will go to school for two full-days a week, with a small number of students in attendance, for example the number of students will be no more than 50 percent of the provincial class size requirements.

For students in grades 6-12, remote and online learning opportunities will continue as the main education delivery with access to some additional school-based supports if teachers and parents determine it's needed. This means that some students may come to school for tutorials or to work on projects but at no time will a middle or secondary school have more than 20 percent of students in the building at any time.

Children of essential service workers in kindergarten to grade 5 who have been accessing urgent childcare will continue to have the option to attend school full-time and identified vulnerable students will continue to be provided with in-school supports five-days a week.

All school staff will be returning to their schools the week of May 25 to allow staff an opportunity to settle back into classrooms/schools and become familiar with the necessary health and safety protocols and building adjustments ahead of the return of a greater number of students.

Remote learning opportunities for K-5 will be temporarily paused the week of May 25 so that elementary school staff can plan prior to the return of students on June 1. As in-class instruction resumes, remote learning for K-5 may look different than it has as teachers will need to support students with both remote learning and in-class instruction.

The return to in-class instruction is completely voluntary for parents and we understand that it is a difficult decision for many to make. Earlier this week we sent elementary parents and guardians a survey asking them to indicate if they would be willing to send their child(ren) back to school in June. Thank you to those that have already completed the survey. As we are now providing some more specifics that we understand may help parents a little more in making this decision, we have extended the survey until midnight on Tuesday, May 19. Should you need the link again, please contact your child's school office.

Please understand that this survey is only to help us with our preliminary planning. Should your decision change as our plans are developed and able to be shared in greater detail, we ask that you notify your child's school principal so that they can make the necessary adjustments.

Again, we know that you might have some apprehension in sending your child(ren) back to school. This is voluntary; no matter which option you choose your child will continue to receive support through this next phase.

We are now working hard to ensure that all the necessary protocols are in place across the district. The safety of students and staff is always our top priority and the framework through which we continue to make all decisions. More information on our plan and the health and safety protocols will be shared as soon as possible.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding.



Dr. Jeremy Morrow  
Superintendent of Schools

