

# RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN 2020–2021



We are pleased to welcome our students back to school in September. Our plans were submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval on August 21, and finalized on August 26.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Our schools have been organized and structured in concert with:

- [Ministry of Education's Restart Plan](#)
- [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)

The [District Health and Safety Plan](#) details the initiatives schools in our district will implement prior to resuming operations.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The district has over 45,000 students in 101 elementary schools.

For parents and students, the timing and organization of instruction in our elementary schools will look very similar to previous years. Students will be in-class five days a week, with face-to-face instruction.

The changes that parents and students will see/experience in September, are largely a result of the health and safety protocols and their impact on class organization, movement and events:

- Schools will be organized in cohorts/learning groups which are their class size. A cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term. Within the cohort, minimized physical contact should be encouraged, but a two-metre physical distance does not need to be maintained. If paired with other classes for common activities, these extended learning groups will not exceed 60.
- Following health and safety protocols, movement is controlled within the school, and guided to limit flow and any contact cross cohort. Areas within the school and outside (e.g. play structures) may be designated for certain cohorts during specific times of the day. Outside activities will be encouraged wherever possible.

- Particularly in our larger schools, movement between the learning groups will require careful coordination due to the size of our schools and their overall capacity. We have 15 elementary schools larger than 600 students, with the two largest having approximately 900 students each. In these larger schools more designated areas and flow will be required due to the number of learning groups. In our smaller schools (4 fewer than 200 students), the flow and movement of learning groups will be far less of a challenge.

As always, parents and community members should look to their school websites for official start and end times as well as detailed communications as they relate to each local context.

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The district has over 28,000 students in 20 secondary schools.

Changes in secondary schools for September include a quartered system with students having access to 2 courses over a 10 week period (8 courses over the full school year).

The school will be divided into two groups – the junior students (Grades 8 and 9) and the graduation program students (Grades 10, 11 and 12):

- **Junior Students** (Grades 8 and 9) will be in attendance 100% of the time and face to face so the learning group size is 60.
- **Graduation Program Students** (Grade 10, 11, 12) will have one class face-to-face and one class in a blended model which will be a combination of face-to-face and online learning. Their learning group size will be approximately 30. When the students are face-to-face in the blended model, the class size will be divided into 1/3<sup>rd</sup> on each day so that physical distancing can be maintained.

We have also staggered entry, breaks and lunches to minimize the numbers of students passing in hallways. This is particularly important in our very large schools. We have 12 secondary schools over 1,400 students and five over 1,600 with the largest close to 2,000 students.

In both elementary and secondary, we anticipate no unusual shifts in curriculum, access or scheduling. We also have structured our schools so that equity is maintained and these models, particularly in secondary, are built on a foundation of maximizing student attendance which adhering to the health guidelines.

Further details on our secondary model can be found in Appendix A.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING IN LEARNING GROUPS

Our employees will all be trained and will follow the health and safety guidelines for physical distancing and wearing masks when working across cohorts/learning groups. All staff will wear masks anytime that they are outside their cohort/learning group or when they cannot safely distance from others.

For those staff who work across multiple learning groups, including TTOC's, they will be required to practice physical distancing or when they cannot physically distance they will be required to wear a mask.

# STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE NEEDS AND ABILITIES

In alignment with the Equity and Inclusion Guiding Principles, our district will communicate with parents:

- The school-based (Integration Support Teacher, BASES Teacher) or itinerant (Teacher of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Teacher of the Blind or Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deafblind, Hospital Homebound) case manager will reach out proactively to parents (and students as appropriate) to find out what families are considering in terms of planning for extra support needs.
- The school-based or itinerant case manager will also reach out proactively to all members of each student's educational team, in relation to the development, implementation, and monitoring of each student's educational program. Communication will occur face-to-face, with physical distancing protocols, or virtually.

Our communications will outline our efforts to ensure that students will:

- 1) Be able to attend school full-time or have a plan to ensure supports and learning continue if a student needs to learn at home.
  - It is the district expectation, that all students attend school full-time, and continue to receive supports and services as identified in their IEP, including 1:1 supports.
  - The principal will ensure that students who require advanced access to the school site can arrange this prior to September 4th in keeping with current health and safety protocols.
  - Where a student must learn from home full- or part-time, as a result of a compromised immune system or other medical issues, the case manager and principal/vice-principal will collaborate with families (and the student as appropriate), to help them make a choice about the most equitable option. The principal/vice-principal will support flexible educational options for students with disabilities/diverse abilities, recognizing their specific human right to equitable access to education.
- 2) Not be grouped in segregated settings as a part of the establishment of cohorts:
  - Students who have diverse abilities/disabilities will be grouped in cohorts, in accordance with the same criteria as their peers.Itinerant and district staff will adhere to current Health and Safety protocols.

3) Continue to receive supports and services as identified in their IEP, including 1:1 supports.

- Students who have diverse abilities/disabilities will begin attending school at the same time as students who do not have diverse abilities/disabilities.
- Supports and services as outlined in the IEP, including 1:1 supports and specialized student interventions will occur face-to-face. Where a student must learn from home, as a result of a compromised immune system or other medical condition, the case manager and principal/vice-principal will collaborate with families (and the student as appropriate), to help them make a choice about the most equitable option. The principal/vice-principal will support flexible educational options for students with disabilities/diverse abilities, recognizing their specific human right to equitable access to education, while ensuring the presence of supports provided by the teacher and the EA or ABA worker, as appropriate.
- Students attending Social Development (elementary) or Connections Programs (secondary) will be grouped into regular school cohorts as is current practice. When students are receiving tier 2 or tier 3 supports, the current Health and Safety protocols will be implemented.
- The classroom and specialty teacher, EA, ABA worker, itinerant teachers, and associated professionals will continue to provide in school, virtual, or face-to-face support as Health and Safety protocols allow.
- Homebound and Visiting Teachers will continue to coordinate IEP supports with the teachers and support staff from the students' home schools as well as any district staff involved in each respective case.

4) Students will have access to the necessary health and safety supports:

- **Nursing Support Services (NSS):** NSS coordinators will continue to support children in school as always, provided they meet the established criteria and the appropriate resources are in place in the school (EAs). The full NSS team is available and making care plans for the children they know are on their respective caseloads.  
  
There are no new restrictions to their service and the criteria for qualifying for delegated care is not changing. All NSS coordinators have access to PPE and its appropriate use. They are also all very familiar with mitigating the spread of infection and follow the FHA guidelines for monitoring their health and not attending work when they are feeling ill.
- **Specialized OT/PT Equipment:** Where appropriate and possible OTs and PTs will deliver equipment to schools and where required, to homes (no-contact).
- **Specialized Hearing Equipment:** Provincial Outreach Program (POP) for Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) and Provincial Resource Program for Children with Visual Impairment will continue to provide equipment to school district staff, who will disperse equipment to schools accordingly. Where students are learning from home, PRP/POP equipment will be sent directly to student homes, and district equipment will be sent to schools via courier, with families being able to pick it up at the school, by appointment. Where students are learning at school, our team will continue to provide equipment as needed.

- **Specialized Vision Equipment:** Provincial Resource for Children with Visual Impairment (PRCVI) will continue to provide equipment to school district staff, who will disperse equipment to schools accordingly. Where students are learning from home, PRCVI equipment will be sent directly to student homes, and district equipment will be sent to schools via courier, with families being able to pick it up at the school, by appointment. Where students are learning at school or home, our team will continue to provide equipment as needed.
- **Specialized Assistive and Augmentative Communication Equipment (AAC):** SLP-AAC equipment will be provided as needed and supported by the SLP-AAC.
- **Specialized SET BC equipment:** Helping Teachers will work with school-based teachers to disperse equipment into schools. Where a child is learning from home, families will be able to pick up equipment from school, by appointment.
- Hospital Homebound will continue to work with students virtually—as per the ongoing plan during the pandemic—in order not to put already medically fragile students at further risk, as almost all Hospital Homebound Students are immune compromised.
- Visiting Teachers will meet as per schedule virtually or in person if student needs to continue to learn at home while implementing all current health and safety protocols.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

All of the district's health and safety protocols are guided by the [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) and the [WorkSafe BC Guidelines](#).

Some further details include:

- Cleaning and disinfection schedules have been altered to ensure that high touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day, and general cleaning of all district buildings is done once per day as per the BCCDC Guideline for Public Buildings.
- General cleaning of the premises will occur at least once per day. Frequently-touched surfaces are intended to be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day.
- Teachers are asked to limit shared resources that students will touch as much as possible to reduce and limit the number of items and those that are not easily cleaned.
- Sharing of tools or other items will be discouraged. Planning of learning activities should include consideration of capacity for cleaning shared objects, equipment and supplies.
- Staff and students will be visually prompted with signage to remain physically distanced as much as possible. This will be reinforced by school administration and staff. We are asking teachers to arrange their teaching spaces with increased distances between students and to utilize time outdoors with students when possible.

- In our secondary schools, we have staggered the start, end and break times and reduced the number of students on site in the afternoons to help facilitate the ability to physically distance.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Staff and students will also be regularly reminded about the importance of diligent hand hygiene, specifically:
  - Before leaving home.
  - Upon arrival at school or work.
  - Before and after any breaks.
  - Between different learning environments.
  - Before and after eating and drinking.
  - Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.
  - Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
  - After using the toilet.
  - After contact with body fluids (I.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood, etc.)
  - After cleaning tasks.
  - After removing gloves.
  - After handling garbage.
  - Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Personal protective equipment for students and staff (including re-useable masks) that was required prior to COVID-19 continues to be available to employees who require it, though the procurement of N-95 masks has been slow to arrive.
- As requested by the Province, we have also placed an order for each staff member and student to receive two re-usable face masks. These are set to arrive prior to the start of school on September 8, 2020. All staff and secondary students will be required to wear a non-medical mask at all times while on buses, in common areas such as hallways, outside the classroom or learning group when physical distancing is not possible.
- As outlined in the K-12 Guidance documentation from BCCDC, we have adopted the procedure recommended and requested that principals and site managers identify isolation areas. We have established and distributed information on the procedures to be used by our First Aid Attendants in keeping with the WSBC guidelines for treatment during COVID-19 and provided a training package on same.
 

A cleaning protocol has been established following the pickup of the ill person. Cleaning will take place prior to next use. Cleaning protocols meet the guidelines for public buildings as issued by BCCDC.
- Ventilation systems will continue to be monitored to ensure they are functioning and our ongoing preventative maintenance program is in place to help ensure that they are meeting the ventilation requirements. The District has a well-established protocol for reporting and responding to any ventilation concerns in a timely fashion.
 

Our Facilities team is conducting an assessment of our buildings to ensure that all ventilation systems are currently functioning as designed prior to the resumption of school in September.

- As per the K-12 Guidelines and the Transport Canada guidance, we are implementing the following strategies on all of our busses:
  - Using consistent and assigned seating arrangements.
  - Considering the order that students typically load and offload to support buses being loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
  - Prioritizing students sharing a seat with a member of their household or cohort.
  - Altering seating arrangements whenever necessary to support student health and safety (e.g. accommodating children with a physical disability, responding to behavioural issues, etc.).
  - If space is available, students will be assigned their own seat.
  - Secondary students will be required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings at all times while on the bus.

## TRAINING FOR STAFF

Prior to the return to Stage 3 in June, all staff were provided information and training in the following:

- Information on how to recognize signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
- How to access the Self-Assessment Tool if experiencing symptoms;
- What to do if they experience signs or symptoms of COVID-19 while at work;
- Restrictions on attending work if they have traveled outside of Canada for any reason for 14 days following their return. Additional information was provided to those employees who are US residents);
- The requirement to follow the recommendations of medical professionals or the Self-Assessment Tool to self-isolate, the requirement to report their absence and inform their supervisor;
- The District's WSBC COVID-19 Safety Plan for Stage 3 – Resumption of In-Class Learning;
- The District's Health & Safety Guidelines for working during Stage 3;
- Instructions on what to do if a student or fellow staff member reports illness or symptoms of COVID-19 while at school or work;
- A copy of the District's Exposure Control Plan;
- Information on the District's Frequently Asked Questions related to returning to school June 1, 2020;
- A copy of a letter from the Fraser Health Authority on the Safe Return to Schools in June, 2020;
- Information on limitations, selection, use and care of personal non-medical masks;
- Staff information will be updated to include the new Stage 2 WSBC COVID-19 Safety Plan, updated District Stage 2 Guidelines and information on the requirements on when and where they will be required to wear non-medical masks;
- Health & Safety Committees will be provided a template presentation to help them communicate the controls put in place by the District and those controls we are expecting Staff to follow and encourage among students; and
- As with information distributed in May, we will be providing the same information available to site-based staff to our Teachers Teaching on Call (TTOC) and Spareboard (casual) staff members.

## TRANSPORTATION

The district provides bus transportation on district-owned buses to students that live in areas outside of prescribed walk limits. Our past practice has been to provide transportation to fee-paying ‘courtesy riders’ who live within walk limits as space on buses permits.

First Nations students are provided transportation to their school of choice in accordance with BC Tripartite Education Agreement. This transportation is also provided on district-owned buses. For special needs students, we utilize a contracted service provider to transport students to their various schools and programs.

We are currently developing routes for our district-owned buses, taking into consideration any direction provided by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, BCCDC, WorkSafe BC and in accordance with district policy and regulation.

# APPENDIX A: SECONDARY SCHOOL TIMETABLES 2020-2021

The below are example models for the purpose of discussion and sharing. Exact times will come from individual schools.

## GRADES 10, 11, 12

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30–9:00	BLENDED LEARNING				
9:00–11:15	BLOCK A				
11:15–12:15	LUNCH				
12:15–2:25	BLOCK B - ONLINE DIRECT INSTRUCTION WHOLE CLASS	BLOCK B - GROUP A FACE TO FACE	BLOCK B - GROUP B FACE TO FACE	BLOCK B - GROUP C FACE TO FACE	BLOCK B - ONLINE DIRECT INSTRUCTION WHOLE CLASS
2:25 - 2:55	BLENDED LEARNING				

- The day begins with Blended Learning which staggers the entry with the students in the Graduation Program (10-12) arriving after the juniors. The Blended time provides teachers with time to prepare, deliver and support their courses. It includes preparation time.
- The lunches and breaks are staggered which minimizes contact between students.
- Having a stand-alone block A provides the course already selected in the student timetable. This gives students the courses they selected to start the year and this model of AB above would roll to CD, EF, and GH in the remaining quarters of the year with blocks A, C, E and G being full time face to face.
- The afternoons have all students in the Graduation Program working on a blended model. On Mondays and Fridays, they are online with their teacher as a whole class. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, the assigned classes are divided into 1/3rds and each third attends one day per week face to face (F2F). The students are socially distanced, staggered entry and exit into the class and teacher remaining physically distanced. The potential is also there to require masks for this portion of instruction because it does result in students moving across cohorts in a physically distanced way in very small numbers likely about 8 students per class.
- The end of the day provides teachers further time to prepare, deliver and support their Blended models. Having these bookends to the day for teachers also allows the district to provide targeted in-service on the use of blended learning and online tools.

Advantages to this model:

1. Keeps cohorts extremely small in grades 10, 11 and 12 (30 in one single block);
2. Works from the foundation of students getting the courses they requested;
3. Keeps students on the graduation pathway they have selected;
4. Staggers entry, breaks, lunch, and exit to ensure minimal contact. No more than 40% of the school will be in session for lunch on any given day;
5. Provides teachers with the time to attend to truly blended learning with in-service time available to them;
6. Provides maximum contact (100%) to our junior students who need this support the most;
7. Has every student attending school every day; and
8. Is extremely responsive to any change in pandemic stages. If COVID cases increase, instructional time can easily be scaled back by block A moving to a blended or alternating day model. This can be accomplished in either the graduation program or junior model.

### GRADES 8 AND 9 – JUNIORS

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30–10:00			BLOCK A		
10:00–10:15			NUTRITION		
10:15–11:30			BLOCK A		
11:30–12:15			LUNCH		
12:15–2:55			BLOCK B		

The junior program is very much more straight forward with students arranged in cohorts of 120 and assigned a block rotation. We believe this can be accomplished with minimal restrictions on courses.

## STUDENT MOVEMENT AND FLOW – LIMITING CONTACT

A key to our model is to limit student contact and the Guidelines for K-12 include cohort sizes of 120 maximum in secondary. In this model, our cohorts in grades 10-12 will be approximately 30 students and staff combined. Here is how that works.

- 1) Since students in grades 10-12 will be getting their selected course in first block, that is their only class of full-time attendance. Therefore, the cohort is that class size which normally is under 30.
- 2) For students in grades 8 and 9, they will be placed in cohorts of 60 (2 classes of 30) and will move through their courses as a cohort according to the guidelines.

With staggered entry, breaks, lunch and closure the numbers of students passing in hallways and in attendance in the school in any given time is limited. This movement is based on a grade 8-12 school of 1500 students. With 5 grades, this means 300 students per grade. There are only 2 possible options for attendance in a week, a day where all 10-12 are online in the afternoon, and a day when 1/3rd of 10-12's are face to face. Here is a breakdown of the numbers and movement.

TIMING	FLOW
8:30	600 JUNIORS ARRIVE AND ATTEND CLASS UNTIL 10:00
9:00	900 GRAD PROGRAM STUDENTS ARRIVE – IN CLASS UNTIL 11:15
10:00 – 10:15	NUTRITION BREAK 600 JUNIORS
11:15 – 12:15	900 GRAD PROGRAM LUNCH – ON T/W/TH 300 REMAIN IN BUILDING. REST OF STUDENTS DEPART.
11:30 – 12:15	600 JUNIOR LUNCH
12:15 – 2:25	T/W/TH – 300 GRAD PROGRAM STUDENTS FACE TO FACE
2:25	T/W/TH – ALL GRAD PROGRAM STUDENTS DISMISS
2:55	ALL STUDENTS DISMISS

The net effect is:

- With a staggered start in a school of 1500 students, 600 (40%) will enter first and 900 (60%) will follow so all students are in attendance all morning.
- A morning nutrition break allows 600 junior students to get some nutrition while they await a delayed lunch and while all gr. 10-12 students are in session.
- A lunch break for grade 10-12 students has 600 students leaving the building on Tuesday/ Wednesday and Thursday and 900 students leaving the building on Monday and Friday. This means maximum lunchtime capacity is 40% of total enrolment.
- In the afternoons, after both lunchtimes are complete, there are never more than 900 students in attendance.
- The total enrolment as a percentage of possible instruction in a week (10 Blocks) is 100% of grades 8/9 and 60% of grades 10-12.
- 100 % of students will be face to face 5 days per week all morning.
- Total student attendance on a weekly basis – 76%.

Total numbers of students receiving face to face instruction weekly (Total attendance = 1500)

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MORNING	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
AFTERNOON	600	900	900	900	600