

This is important information. Please have this translated.

هذه الرسالة مهمة جداً . يرجى الطلب من شخص ما بترجمتها لك .

請找人替閣下翻譯這重要通告。이것은 중요한 통지입니다. 꼭 번역하여 읽으십시오.

यह बहुत ज़रूरी नोटिस है एसका हिन्दी मे अनुवाद कराईये।

Ito ay importanteng impormasyon. Mangyaring isalin ito sa Tagalog.

February 19, 2021

Dear Surrey Schools community,

We recognize that this has been a difficult year, and I'd like to reassure you that the health and safety of our staff, students and families remains our district's highest priority.

Our Provincial Health Officer views the full and continued operation of schools to be critical to a healthy society and we are committed to ensuring our students can continue to learn as safely as possible. To ensure we are taking every preventative measure necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our schools, our district has been collaborating with Fraser Health to assess district health and safety plans to determine if any other actions are necessary. This includes environmental assessments of individual schools.

To date, we have conducted 3 assessments (Ecole Panorama Ridge Secondary, Cambridge Elementary and Newton Elementary) collaboratively with Fraser Health. Each assessment included a physical review of each site, along with interviews with key staff at the site and a review of procedures and protocols.

Fraser Health's final reports of each assessment are attached. All three of the assessments conducted to date found our schools to be in compliance with provincial protocols and reiterated critical areas of focus to continue limiting the spread of COVID-19. It's important that as you read the assessments, you recognize our district's commitment to transparency about COVID-19 exposures in our schools and our protocols.

As you are no doubt aware, our schools have had a number of exposures (that are community acquired) and that have not resulted in school-based transmission – this is a testament to the fact that our staff and students are following protocols consistent with public health guidelines and recommendations. I want to personally commend our staff and students for being vigilant, working within the guidelines and taking all the necessary steps to ensure safety. The reports clearly demonstrate that it takes all of us working together, at every level of the protocols, to ensure that we keep safe.

Our schools are safely open and this is largely due to the caring and dedicated professionals who are working hard at each site and remain committed to the health and safety of our students.

If you have any questions about this report, please email us at [comm-office@surreyschools.ca](mailto:comm-office@surreyschools.ca).

Sincerely,



Jordan Tinney  
Superintendent of Schools/CEO

## **Joint Site Visit Report in Response to COVID-19**

### **School: Newton Elementary**

#### **Introduction**

In response to an outbreak closure of Newton Elementary due to COVID-19, a joint visit by representatives from the Surrey School District, the Newton Elementary administration team and Fraser Health was conducted on December 8, 2020. The intent of the inspection was to identify recommendations that could be implemented before the school is re-open to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 from reoccurring.

#### **Methodology**

On the day of the visit, the team consisted of a Fraser Health Public Health Nurse and an Environmental Health Officer, Surrey School Board representatives and administration team for Newton Elementary School including members of the Site-Based Health and Safety Committee. Based on the Ministry of Education Provincial Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings (September 3, 2020), Ministry of Health COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings (September 11, 2020), and the Surrey School Board Health and Safety Guidelines for Covid-19 (2020-2021), Fraser Health had developed a Covid-19 assessment guide for the team to use. A copy of the assessment guide is attached in Appendix 1. The intent of the assessment guide is to provide the team with a consistency approach in assessing potential risks related to Covid-19.

The assessment guide is divided into seven main categories, each with its own subcomponents. Each component was either marked off as satisfactory, discuss improvements, or not applicable. The seven main categories are:

- cohorts,
- physical distancing,
- awareness/education and communication,
- screening/monitoring,
- personal/environmental hygiene,
- personal protective equipment, and
- setting where cohorting or physical distancing not feasible.

As a validation tool, the following methods were used:

- documentation on-site within the school office,
- documented in the Surrey Schools and Covid Safety Plan,
- observations by the team, or
- questions from the Fraser Health Population and Public Health team to the staff were used as validation tools for the assessment guide.

On the day of the visit, the team had an opportunity to tour the whole school and review the Covid-19 disinfection procedures.

## Observations

The following general observations noted at the time of inspection were aligned with the Ministry of Education Provincial Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings (September 3, 2020), the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings (September 11, 2020), and the Surrey School Board Health and Safety Guidelines for Covid-19 (2020-2021) :

- From the middle of November 2020, the staff at Newton Elementary had implement the following in an effort the prevent the spread of Covid-19:
  - Eliminated pod arrangement seating and the use of rainbow tables within the classrooms. Student desk configuration within the classrooms were all forward facing to limit students from facing each other during class.
  - Discontinued the use of the staff fridge, coffee machines, and microwaves to limit high touch surfaces.
  - Stopped singing activities by students during musical.
  - Requested teachers to avoid invasive team games during physical education.
- Students were placed in assigned seating.
- The occupancy limit for the staff lunch room has been set to allow for physical distancing of two meters. Additional lunching areas have been made available for staff to allow adequate distancing.
- Within the music room, students are spread out on raisers and on the floor. Musical equipment are disinfected after each use and assigned to specific division.
- Size of learning groups were within the provincial guidelines.
- Individual students supplies were stored separately from each other. Shared toys are either individually bagged or left unused for three days.
- Review of hand hygiene protocols were within established guidelines.
- Social distance floor markings are placed on hallways and outside of washrooms.
- Itinerant staff would follow established guidelines when interacting with students.
- The school had implemented a staggered recess and lunch breaks by grades to limit potential congregation students and mixing of cohorts.
- Students would enter classroom from outside to limit congregation in the hallways.
- Water fountains have been shut off. Students and staff were asked to use their own water bottle and refilled at bottling stations.

## Recommendations

Based on the guidelines used to complete the inspection processes, the following recommendations are being provided to further help reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission within the school.

All of the recommendations are within the scope of the BCCDC & Ministry of Health Covid-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings (September 11, 2020), and Ministry of Education Provincial Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings (September 3, 2020).

## **Recommendations:**

### **Student setting**

- As water fountains within the classrooms are not intended to be used, they should be properly taped off as they were noted to be functional.
- Limit the Learning Support Program room to two students or less per rainbow table to allow for greater distancing between students.
- The occupancy limit for washrooms has been set to one student at a time. Have the occupancy limit posted outside of the washroom area.

### **Staffing area**

- Encourage staff to wear mask in the lunchroom when not eating or drinking.
- Eliminate any shared utensils or dishware in the staff area.
- Block off sofa in the staff kitchen to prevent people from sitting within 2 meters of each other.
- Have floor markings for the staff sign-in area located in the common area outside of the main office.

### **Cleaning and disinfecting**

- Ensure all staff are aware if a chemical is intended to be used as cleaner or as a disinfectant. All chemicals placed in classrooms should be used accordingly and based on its intended purposes.
- Ensure all cleaners and disinfectants placed in classrooms are properly labelled.
- Teachers should only use chemicals approved by the Surrey School District.

## **Conclusion**

The Newton Elementary administration team, teachers, and staff have demonstrated a high level of dedication to ensure the health and safety of everyone within the school community is maintained. Fraser Health would like to thank the Surrey School Board and the Newton Elementary administration team for providing the opportunity for the visit.