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September 16, 2021

RE: Back to School Update

Issued by the Government of Alberta, "Alberta has declared a State of Public Health Emergency to protect the health care system." With this declaration, the Alberta government has implemented [additional guidelines](#) for schools to keep students and staff safe. Effective immediately:

- All Grades 4-12 students and all staff must wear masks.
 - Masks and distancing are not required by youth under 18 while engaged in physical activity.
- All students will continue to wear masks on the bus.
- Student events will be virtual (i.e. assemblies).
- Physical distancing will occur.
- Parent Council meetings will be virtual.
- Class cohorting in K-6 classrooms.

There are further [requirements](#) related to indoor activities including performance, physical activities, recreation and special interest groups in schools.

The attached Back to School plan has the updates in bold. The Minister of Education continues to share that "school authorities continue to have the ability and corresponding accountability for any local measures that are put in place, which may exceed provincial guidance." When BTPS schools have COVID cases and outbreaks of respiratory illness, all students will be required to wear a mask in common areas and hallways.

Because of increased illness, some of our schools are already experiencing challenges with finding substitutes. There may be a time when we need to shift a class to at home learning. It is very important that anyone showing symptoms listed on the Alberta Health Daily [Checklist](#) must remain home.

We realize that adjustments of the guidelines do pose challenges. We take our direction from the Alberta Education and the Chief Medical Health Officer and we know that our plans are subject to further change. Thank you for your patience, cooperation and support as we keep our students and staff safe.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. St. Holloien".

Rhae-Ann Holloien



Back to School 2021-2022

Alberta Education – Planning for a new school year

Updated September 15, 2021 (New Provincial Guidelines)

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Health Measures		
1.	Daily Screening	Parents and caregivers must assess their children daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. Anyone showing symptoms listed on the Alberta Health Daily Checklist must remain home.
2.	Stay Home if Sick	Students or staff who have symptoms are required to stay home. AHS provides guidance on isolation and testing if a staff or student has COVID-19 symptoms.
3.	Handwashing	BTPS is providing hand sanitizer at all school entrances and for all classrooms.
4.	Masks	All students on a bus must wear a mask as per the provincial health order. Masks are mandated for students in Grades 4-12 and all staff (NEW) as per the new provincial health order. Masks and distancing are not required by youth under 18 while engage in physical activity (NEW). Parents/guardians and visitors must wear masks when they are in the schools.
5.	Physical Distancing	Physical distancing must occur in hallways, washrooms and common areas (NEW) as per the new health order.
6.	Showing symptoms while at school	Staff will need to go home right away. Students will be moved to a school’s sickroom, parents/guardians will be called, the student will need to be picked up and taken home. A sick child will not be able to ride a bus.

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7.	Confirmed COVID-19 case at school	AHS has indicated that schools will not be informed about individual COVID-19 cases. If we receive notification from AHS about a positive case, we will communicate with the school community. If there is a positive COVID-19 case within a school, masks will be mandatory for all staff and students for 14 days. Anyone with COVID-19 is legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days.
8.	Isolate or quarantine with core symptoms	Everyone is legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if they have a core symptom or until the symptoms resolve (whichever is longer). Please review the core symptom list .
9.	Close contacts or family members of a positive COVID-19 case	If a member of the household has COVID-19, it is mandatory that any staff or student in the same household not attend school as it is a high risk area and if symptoms develop, it is recommended the person must isolate and get tested .

Physical Set up in Schools

1.	Cohorts	Elementary students will be cohorted for classes and breaks (NEW).
2.	Lockers	Students will be able to use lockers provided to them at the school.
3.	Cleaning	We are providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced cleaning of high touch areas throughout the day. Enhanced cleaning of ventilation systems.
4.	Physical Distancing	Wherever possible, the division will promote physical distancing in hallways, washrooms and common areas. This may mean that there is reduced seating in common areas and breaks may be staggered throughout the day.
5.	Common Areas	Seating may be reduced. Schools will have procedures for physical distancing.

Daily Operations of Schools

1.	Visitors	Visitors to our schools will be limited (NEW). All visitors to the school must wear a mask, use proper hand hygiene upon entering, and complete the BTPS daily screening app . Visitors, students or staff who feel ill or have symptoms of COVID-19 cannot enter the school. Visitors for extra-curricular must physical distance, and capacity is limited to 1/3 capacity (NEW) as per the new health order.
2.	Outbreaks	AHS will continue to support schools if there is an outbreak of respiratory illnesses.

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3.	School activities	Schools will be working with their staff to ensure that students are not in large gathering and student activities will be virtual (NEW) (ie. assemblies).
4.	Staggered Start	Schools may choose to have a staggered start schedule for half of the students to attend on September 1 and half on September 2. Watch for information from your student's school.
5.	Water Fountains	Water fountains will continue to operate. Students are encouraged to bring and fill water bottles. Water fountains will be cleaned throughout the day.
6.	Shared equipment	Students will use and store their own personal school supplies. Schools will minimize shared equipment, textbooks and materials. Materials that are shared will be cleaned after use.
7.	School libraries	Schools will cohort or schedule students to use the library at specific times. Spaces will be cleaned throughout the day.
9.	School Nutrition Programs	Schools will be able to work within the safety guidelines and protocols to maintain their nutrition programs.
10.	Assemblies	School wide events, assemblies and performances will be virtual as we begin the year.
11.	Extra-curricular Activities	Indoor sports, fitness, recreation, and performance activities are permitted in schools, with requirements to maintain 2 metre physical distancing where possible. - Masks and distancing are not required by youth under 18 while engaged in physical activity (NEW). See Guidelines .
12.	Field Trips	As much as possible, to start the year, schools are encouraged to participate in virtual field trips. Day trips may be approved ensuring all safety protocols are followed, physical distancing, and masking requirements. Masks may be required at indoor locations. Overnight trips are not permitted at this time. Parents/guardians are not able to drive students who do not live in their household to field trips or extra-curricular events. Spectators are limited as per the new health order on September 15, 2021 and physical distancing must occur (NEW).

Transportation

1.	Masks	Masks are required on school buses. Students will not be allowed on the bus without a mask. Grades 4-12 students and all staff must wear masks (NEW) as per the new health order.
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2.	Seating Plans	There will be a seating plan on the bus, but it will not need to be the first on loads at the back.
3.	Cleaning	Busses will be cleaned after each bus run.
4.	Pick up of students	Where possible, students will practice physical distancing (NEW) as per the new health order.
5.	AHS Guidelines	The government's guidance for school busses is here .

Government Requirements - Symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19

I have symptoms and I test positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate for 10 days, and asked to contact their own close contacts. Stay home until symptoms have resolved Anyone with COVID needs to contact their own close contacts.
I have symptoms and I test negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home until symptoms have resolved
I am a student who has not been tested	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you are a student and your symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath or loss of sense of taste/smell, isolate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for at least 10 days or until symptoms have improved, and until you have no fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications whichever is longer A student may have other symptoms (such as chills, sore throat/painful swallowing, runny nose/congestion, feeling unwell/fatigued, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, unexplained loss of appetite, muscle/joint aches, headache or conjunctivitis). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you have one of these other symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay home and monitor for 24 hours. If your symptom improves, return to school when you feel well enough. (Testing is not necessary). If you have two symptoms or one symptom that persists or worsens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay home until symptom(s) are gone. (Testing is recommended but not required).
I am an adult who has not been tested	<p>If you are an adult and symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or runny nose, isolate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for at least 10 days or until symptoms have improved, and until you have no fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications whichever is longer. <p>Adults who have other symptoms should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay home until symptoms are gone.
I do not have symptoms and have a positive test result	Isolate for at least 10 days from the date that you were tested (when the sample was collected).

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Immunization Clinics

	Immunization Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools will work with AHS to host these clinics. Parent or guardian consent will be required for students who wish to participate.• For more information on vaccination policies and requirements, contact Alberta Health Services.
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