

May 29, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, Students, and Families

It is exciting to see that so many students will be able to return to part-time in-class instruction starting June 1st. There are several practices that have been put in place in order to ensure that all learners, staff, families, and our community stay healthy and safe during this time. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself and your child(ren) with the information provided below.

a) COVID-19: How is it transmitted and what are the risks?

Medical evidence on COVID-19 has found that the disease is transmitted from a sick person to another through droplets that come from their mouth (droplet transmission). When a sick person coughs or sneezes, these droplets can spread up to two meters. Droplet transmission is different than a virus that is airborne, in that droplets fall to the ground (and are spread through touch).

The spread of COVID-19 among, or from, children is very rare, and that's why the Ministry of Health and the BC Center of Disease Control say that schools are a low risk. Children are a very low risk for being infected by COVID-19. You can find more information from the [Government of BC](#); and the [BC Center of Disease Control](#).

b) Individuals with increased risk

People aged 65 or older and those that have an underlying medical condition may be at increased risk of having a more serious reaction to COVID-19.

c) Practices for those who are attending

1. **Complete the Daily Health Self-Assessment** – a daily health check tool that can be found below
2. **Practice Physical Distancing** – Schools will be doing their part by ensuring a safe setup of our classrooms and common spaces to help students keep physically distant.
3. **Continue regular hand washing and other hygiene measures** – Everyone will be asked to wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, when first entering schools.
4. **Safe Building Access** – Only students and staff will be allowed into the building

d) Safe Building access - In order to help keep everyone safe and health, only students and staff will be allowed inside the school. Regular drop offs will happen outside and students may need to use a different entrance to limit any large gathering. Schools will communicate their specific plan.

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e) Daily Health Self-Assessment

Anyone who wants to attend school must check themselves for symptoms of any sickness prior to going. Symptoms include:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever (> 37.5 °C using thermometer)
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Headache
- Chills
- Feeling unwell/fatigue
- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea
- Nausea/vomiting

If you show any signs of the listed symptoms, please stay home. Anyone showing any symptoms of sickness will not be allowed into schools. If you want to check your symptoms, you can use the [BC CDC COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) for guidance. Please notify the school of your child's absence.

- f) Pick up protocol (illness)** – If your child becomes sick at school they will need to be picked up immediately. Please ensure you have someone available, and that they are listed as a safe pickup person with your school.
- g) If you travel outside of Canada** – Students who travel outside of Canada will not be permitted back to school until the 14-day self-isolation is complete. If you require additional schooling support during this time, please contact your principal.
- h) Bus use** – **The recommendations from the BC Centre of Disease Control is that families should drive their own child(ren) to school in their own personal vehicle.** If you cannot, our bus service is still available. Prior to riding the bus, please complete the daily health self-assessment (above). Students will use hand sanitizer when the bus picks them up. Like at school, if your child is sick, they must stay home and will not be permitted to ride the bus. Any student who is sick, and 12 years or younger, will not be allowed on and will be returned to their parent or guardian. The pickup protocol for illness will apply should a student become sick on the bus. They will be brought to the closest school and the principal or vice-principal will arrange for pickup.
- i) Belongings for the day** – Please send everything your child(ren) will need for the day including food, water, and their own cutlery. Everything brought to school will have to go home at the end of the day for a thorough cleaning.

Each school has their own set of detailed cleaning and safety protocols that are being followed and align with the procedures handed down by the BC Centre for Disease Control, Ministry of Health, and WorkSafeBC.

Thank you for helping ensure schools stay safe, healthy, and welcoming places.

Sincerely,



Robyn Gray
Superintendent
Cowichan Valley School District



Shannon Waters, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer
Cowichan Valley Region