



Conseil scolaire du
NORD-OUEST

GUIDE FOR MANAGING COVID-19

Kindergarten to Grade 12

2021-2022

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The CSNO is pleased to welcome you for the 2021-2022 school year!

The Conseil scolaire du Nord-Ouest's (CSNO) back-to-school plan aims to ensure the success and well-being of every student and to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all. It aims to support our collective responsibility for the health and safety of students, staff and visitors while ensuring that student learning continues in the safest and healthiest conditions possible in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The plan may be amended as directed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and will be adjusted as information is available and following the assessment of changing conditions related to Covid-19 in Alberta.

A NORMAL RETURN TO CLASS

Under the health measures and provisions provided by the Ministry of Education in its [2021-2022 Return to Learning Plan](#), the CSNO's plan allows for a normal return to class and activities, such as:

- ➔ **Diploma exams and Provincial Achievement Tests (grade 6 & 9)**
- ➔ **Extra-curricular Activities**
- ➔ **Local Field Trips**
(NB - Provincial, national and international outings are suspended for the month of September. This decision will be reviewed at the end of September.)
- ➔ **School Gatherings** (see Distancing and Cohorts)
- ➔ **School Visitors** (see Screening for Symptoms)
- ➔ **High School Graduation.**

HYGIENE AND HEALTH BEST PRACTICES

In parallel with the return to normalcy, the School Board will continue hygiene and health best practices and measures aimed at reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and ensuring the safety of students.

The following measures will be in effect for the start of the school year and until they are revised.

Covid-19 Risk Reduction

Starting January 3rd, 2021, the CSNO will require that all employees, contractors and volunteers working inside CSNO buildings demonstrate evidence of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, or comply with the testing requirements as set out in Administrative Directive 491. This administrative directive does not apply to CSNO bus drivers, students or their parents/guardians, unless they are volunteering. The Administrative Directive 491 is available on the [CSNO website](#).

Environmental Control

- Regular maintenance of ventilation systems.
- Cleaning and disinfecting premises and equipment is an essential component of the fight against the spread of the virus.
 - The janitorial service will provide day cleaning and frequent cleaning procedures for high contact surfaces.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- All staff and students will continue hand hygiene practices when entering school and during the school day. (See Appendix A)
- All staff and students (preschool, elementary and high school) will be made aware of respiratory etiquette.

Screening for Symptoms

- All students and school staff will be required to screen daily for symptoms before arriving at school using the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#).
- Anyone with signs/symptoms of illness should not show up for school.
- Albertans are [legally required to isolate](#) if they tested positive or have any symptoms that are not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- Visitors (15 mins +) – For January, only ESSENTIAL visitors will be allowed in the school during class hours. (To be reviewed at the end of January)

Responding to Illness

- Protocol for a student or staff member who demonstrates symptoms at school. (Same as 2020-2021 - see Appendix B).
- If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID, they must follow the [isolation instructions](#).
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school administration to inform them of their child's symptoms.
- As is the practice for other viruses (H1N1, influenza), the school will notify AHS when more than 10% of students are absent for similar symptoms.

Case Notification and School Follow Up

- **AHS will NOT inform** the School Board if an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 was present at the school when it was contagious.
- Students and staff in close contact with a positive case no longer have to quarantine and will no longer be informed by AHS of such contact.

Use of Masks

- Masking is mandatory for students in grades 4-12 and staff and teachers in all grades.
 - SEE Annexe C - Guidelines for masks in schools
- The use of masks is **mandatory** for everyone on school buses.
- Students and staff who develop symptoms of respiratory illness at school and anyone caring for those who have developed symptoms of respiratory illness at school will be required to wear a mask.

Cohorts

- Class cohorting from Kindergarten to Grade 6 when possible.
- Gatherings between elementary students and junior/senior high students will be avoided whenever possible.
- Principals may establish cohorts from time to time if they deem it necessary and practical to improve the safety of students and staff.

Distancing

- Each school will apply the principles of physical distancing in certain situations where possible, such as:
 - hallway traffic (ex. for recess, etc.)
 - indoor sport/performance/recreation events
 - placing desks in groups, etc.

Gatherings

Physical activity in schools:

- Students are permitted to participate in group physical activity as part of an education program curriculum (i.e., physical education class and sports academy classes may occur) and in an extracurricular physical activity. Participants must continue to follow the school guidance regarding cohorting (kindergarten through grade 6), physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, and use of non-medical masks when students are not physically active.
- Youth aged 18 and under are not required to mask or maintain two-metre physical distancing during a physical activity such as physical education.

Student's sport/performance/recreation activities (extracurricular sports, celebrations, and special interest):

- These activities are allowed indoors, while respecting cohorts, physical distancing of two meters, wearing a mask and screening participants for symptoms.

Spectator attendance

- The presence of spectators at indoor shows/celebrations/school and extracurricular activities is not permitted. These activities should be made accessible virtually to the school community.
- The presence of spectators at outdoor activities is permitted. However, spectators must maintain a physical distance between different households or between a person who lives alone and their two close contacts.

APPENDIX A

Hand hygiene

Washing hands often with warm water and soap during at least 20 seconds or with a hydroalcoholic solution (at least 60%) limits the risk of transmission. Hand washing with soap and running water is essential. Alternatively, the use of hand sanitizer is recommended.

Everyone **should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer:**

- Upon arrival at school and before they return home;
- Before and after any transition within the school (for example, in another class, indoor-outdoor transitions);
- Before eating and drinking;
- After going to the toilet;
- After playing outside;
- After sneezing or coughing into the hands;
- When the hands are visibly dirty.

There will be hand sanitizer containing at least 60 per cent alcohol (or alcohol-free hand sanitizer) at the entrances and exits, at the entrance to classrooms, near frequently touched equipment, such as microwave ovens, vending machine and other high-traffic areas.

- Bottles of hand sanitizer will be out of reach of children.
- Staff must supervise the use of an alcohol disinfectant when used by young children.
- Schools will have posters encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene and how to wash their hands in each washroom and other spaces as needed.
- Schools will put in place supervision strategies to ensure that everyone disinfects their hands at all entry and exit points of the classroom and school.
- Adopt good hand hygiene when handling paper tests and homework.

APPENDIX B

Students who have symptoms at school

If a student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 (for example, fever, new or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, runny nose, or sore throat), he/she must wear a non-medical mask and should be isolated if possible and the parent / guardian must be notified immediately to come pick up the student.

- If the parents cannot pick up their child, they must have a plan so that someone else can pick up the child within an hour.
- If no separate room is available for the student while waiting to be picked up by a parent or guardian, the student should be kept at least 2 metres from all other staff and wear a face mask.
- If the child/student requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the child/student until the parent is able to pick up the child/student. The student and staff must wear a mask and close interactions with the student that may result in contact with the student's respiratory secretions should be avoided. If very close contact is required and the child is young the staff member should also use a face shield or eye protection.
- Staff/students must wash their hands before donning a mask, before and after removing the mask (as per Alberta Health mask guidance), and before and after touching any items used by the child/student.
- The isolation area for the sick should be cleaned and disinfected after the student has left, and any items that cannot be disinfected (for example, paper books or cardboard) should be placed in a plastic bag and stored for at least 10 days.
- If a student is sent home for showing signs of COVID-19, the parent or guardian should call 811 and follow the advice provided by Alberta Health Services.
- The student cannot return to school until he or she complies with current public health requirements.

Schools must keep records of a student's known pre-existing conditions. If a student develops symptoms in or outside of the program that could be caused by COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies), the student should be tested for COVID-19 at least once to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the school.

APPENDIX C

Use of masks

(Updated – September 16)

On September 15, the Government of Alberta mandated masks in schools for students in grades 4 to 12 and all school staff.

Guidelines for wearing masks in schools (starting September 16 and until further notice):

- Wearing a mask is mandatory for students in grades 4 to 12 in common areas **and in the classroom when students must work in proximity of one another.**
- Mandatory mask wearing for all school staff in common areas and in the classroom when 2 M distancing cannot be respected.
- **Mandatory mask wearing for visitors at all times.**
- Wearing a mask is highly recommended for kindergarten to Grade 3 students in common areas.
- It is not necessary to wear a mask when eating/drinking, outdoors or during intense physical activity.
- Youth under the age of 18 are not required to wear a mask or maintain a physical distance of two metres when participating in physical activities such as physical education classes.
- Individuals who wish to have an exemption from wearing a mask at school **must obtain a medical exemption.**