



Conseil scolaire du
NORD-OUEST

BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN 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.

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](#) for 10 days if you tested positive or have any core symptoms that are not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- Visitors to the school will have to fill out and sign the AHS Daily Checklist for visits longer than 15 minutes.

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](#).
- The school administration will no longer be notified by AHS if there is a positive case at the school.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school administration to inform them of their child's symptoms.
- 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.
- 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.

Distancing and Cohorts

- Physical distancing is no longer required, but each school will apply, depending on its circumstances, the principles of physical distancing in certain situations and where possible. For example: avoid placing desks in groups, coordinate traffic for recess as needed, etc.
- 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.

Use of Masks*

- [NEW - Guidelines for mask in schools – SEE Annexe C](#)
- The use of masks is **mandatory** for everyone on school buses.
- ~~○ Wearing a mask is **optional** for students and staff in the school.~~
- ~~○ Depending on local conditions, the CSNO may require visitors to wear masks in the school.~~
- 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.

*The CSNO may make changes to this measure if local conditions change or if a mandatory measure is imposed on schools by the province or community.

Immunization Program in Schools

- AHS will offer vaccination clinics in CSNO schools.
- Students 12 years of age and older (born in 2009 and earlier) are eligible to receive the vaccine at school with the written consent of their parent or guardian.
- More information on vaccinations in schools will be provided to parents by their local school as information is available.

**Bonne année
scolaire 2021-2022**

**À NOS ÉLÈVES ET MEMBRES
DU PERSONNEL!**



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 3)

The number of COVID cases continues to rise in our communities and the School Board has decided to add this temporary measure to its back-to-school plan.

Reasons for this decision include:

- The Board believes that wearing a mask in common spaces can ensure continued in-school learning by reducing the risk of an outbreak. According to AHS guidelines: *"If there is a school-wide absence rate of 10% or greater due to illness OR there are an unusual amount of individuals with similar symptoms, AHS may declare an outbreak and recommend additional voluntary measures to reduce ongoing transmission for the duration of the outbreak, generally 14 days from when the outbreak was declared, unless absenteeism continues to increase."*
Note that 10% absenteeism does not represent a large number of people for our schools (between 10 and 20 only depending on the school).
- Isolation measures for close contact with a positive case have been removed and there is no way for the administration to know if there are positive cases at school.
- The province has announced the return of mask wearing in all public places.

Guidelines for wearing masks in schools (starting September 7 and until further notice):

- Mandatory mask wearing for all school staff and visitors in common areas and in the classroom when 2 M distancing cannot be respected.
- Wearing a mask is mandatory for students in grades 4 to 12 in common areas.
- Wearing a mask is highly recommended for kindergarten to Grade 3 students in common areas.
- Individuals who wish to have an exemption from wearing a mask at school should discuss their request with the school administration.
- It is not necessary to wear a mask when eating/drinking, outdoors or during intense physical activity.