

2020-21 Plan for School Re-entry

Parkland School Division

October 13, 2020



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Implementation of this school re-entry plan is subject to change with direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is based on the best available information and conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan will be adjusted when information becomes available as the status of the COVID-19 pandemic changes.

Student and staff safety is the centre of all decisions that guide PSD's Re-entry Plan. Parkland School Division is committed to Student Success and Well-Being. The Division recognizes that, as a system, well-being must be present for all stakeholders, and therefore is committed to fostering physical literacy, lifelong health and well-being at all levels.

In-Person Classes Resume

Overview

On July 22, 2020 the GOA announced the decision to resume in-person classes for the 2020-2021 school year. Students in Parkland School Division have the option of returning to school on August 31, 2020.

In June, 2020, the GOA indicated a decision would be made regarding school re-entry by August 1, 2020 and would be based on three potential scenarios. **While school divisions have some flexibility in addressing local context, any decision on which scenario is implemented resides with the Alberta Government.** The decision will depend on advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health based on how the pandemic is trending at that time.

Scenarios:

1. In-school classes resume (in-person classes and operations with additional health measures)
2. In-school classes partially resume with additional health measures
3. At-home learning continues, in-school classes are cancelled

While the GOA has selected scenario 1, it is imperative that school authorities plan and **prepare for all of these three scenarios as the COVID-19 pandemic may change at any time and school authorities may be required to transition from one scenario to another with short notice.** If the Ministry of Health instructs the division, or a school within the division, to transition to Scenario 2, students and staff will be required to quickly transition to a program that blends in-school classes with learning-at-home.

The Parkland School Division (PSD) [Guidance for Schools Re-entry Plan - Principal's Handbook](#) will guide our schools when it comes to our COVID-19 response and operations for the 2020-2021 school year.

All of the measures implemented in this plan and the [Guidance for School Re-Entry -Principal's Handbook](#) apply to both Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 when it comes to general building safety, enhanced cleaning, screening and responding to illness.

How is Scenario 2 different from Scenario 1?

- The guidance described for Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 is similar for many categories.
- Scenario 2 guidance tends to be more prescriptive.
- A key difference between the two is the implementation of defined cohorting with Scenario 2. This means that groups of students must stay together and would MOST LIKELY attend schools on alternating days in order to facilitate more physical distancing. Students work on teacher assigned/self-directed/online content on days when they are home.

Procedural guidance

Procedural guidance comes from the Ministry of Health and is informed by Alberta government guidance documents, directives from Alberta Education and PSD policies and administrative procedures.

- Key documents include:
 - PSD Documents:
 - [PSD 2020-21 Guidance for School Re-Entry](#)
 - PSD Staff/Parent [Survey summary\(s\)](#)
 - [PSD Policies and Procedures](#)

PSD COVID-19 Protocols

- [Mask Protocol](#)
- [Transportation Services COVID-19 Measures](#)
- [Educational Options for 2020-2021](#)
- [Enhanced Cleaning Protocol](#)
- [Staff and Students School Entry Protocol](#)
- [Visitor Entry Protocol for PSD School Sites](#)
- [Responding to Illness Protocol](#)
- Alberta Government/Alberta Health Services Documents:
 - <https://www.alberta.ca/guidance-documents.aspx>
- Alberta Education Documents:
 - [2020-21 School Re-Entry Plan](#)
 - [Guidance for School Re-Entry - Scenario 1](#)
 - [Guidance for School Re-Entry - Scenario 2](#)

School and Instructional Planning

Staggered Entry

All Parkland School Division schools will employ a staggered entry for ALL Kindergarten to Grade 9 students to facilitate teaching students about the new Divisional Guidelines and provincial health measures necessary for in-school classes. Students will be divided into two groups; one group will attend Monday August 31 and the second group will attend Sept 1 with all students returning on Wednesday, Sept 2. Schools will be communicating which group and day students will be attending with families prior to the start of the school year. To the greatest extent possible, siblings will attend on the same day.

High School Quarters

Following consultation and collaboration with other school divisions, Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services (AHS) on what next year could look like, Parkland School Division, Memorial Composite High School and Spruce Grove Composite High School have decided that the Quarter System will be implemented in the high school setting instead of the traditional semester system. This will help facilitate the AHS recommended cohorts for our students while practicing enhanced cleaning protocols. The quarter system will limit the number of people with whom students and staff interact as well as the number of spaces with which they need to visit over the course of the day.

Cohorts

To the greatest extent possible, schools will:

- Plan to have students work in a cohort (defined as a group of students who work through curriculum together)
- Plan to have teachers switch classrooms, not students
- Schedule staggered breaks, lunch time, transition between classes, recess, etc. to keep cohorts separate
- Schools are to keep records of cohorts and potential interactions between students/cohorts to assist with potential contact tracing
- Students may receive modified elective/optional (i.e. Music, Foods, etc.) courses as part of a cohort

Guidance for Parents & Guardians

- Links to the self-assessment tool will be sent home or shared (newsletters, school websites, etc.) throughout the school year as appropriate.
- Before arriving at school, all students, staff or visitors must self-screen for symptoms using the supplied PSD [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire](#). A copy **DOES NOT** need to be submitted each day.
- Schools may implement additional screening procedures based on the needs of programs and/or student population.
- Additionally, the Alberta Health Services [COVID-19 SELF-ASSESSMENT](#) self-screening checklist is available for all parents, students and staff to self-screen and determine if a COVID-19 test is required.
- When absences are required:
 - Parents must inform the school when children are kept home for any reason (to differentiate staying at home because of symptoms vs other reasons)
- In case of emergent conditions:
 - Parents must be able to retrieve students from school during the school day
- If a school, the division or the province must move to Scenario 2 or 3:
 - Parents must ensure that students are able to remain at home and are supported to continue learning-at-home

School Re-Entry Considerations

The [PSD Guidance for School Re-Entry](#) provides specific direction for the following categories of risk mitigation:

- General building safety
- Screening
- Responding to illness
- Cohorts of students
- Physical distancing
- Expectations for drop-off/pick-up and entry areas at school
- In-person learning
- Expectations for visitors and other service providers entering the school
- Risk mitigation for high traffic areas in school facilities
- Expectations for shared use of equipment
- Auxiliary spaces
- Food services
- Off-campus/Work experience, Field Trips, Extra-curricular and other learning experiences
- Student Transportation

Each School will develop and share a school specific plan based on the above.

Health and Safety Measures

Parkland School Division will implement health measures to identify, minimize, and mitigate the risk of spread of COVID-19. *(The following elements have been expanded in detail defined in the [PSD Guidance for School Re-Entry - Principal's Handbook](#).*

- Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices
 - Ensure students are taught and reminded about proper hand washing techniques, the importance of physical distancing, and coughing and sneezing technique.
 - Encourage the use of face masks where appropriate and instruct and remind students on the proper use, especially in situations where physical distancing is difficult.
 - Have access to required handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer
- Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting
 - Enhanced daily cleaning by daytime custodians
 - Frequent cleaning high touch surfaces (door handles etc.)
 - Removal of soft surfaces such as area rugs or pillows
 - Individual work stations/shared equipment to be cleaned between users
- Physical Distancing
 - Establish physical distancing routines
 - Manage foot traffic flow, addition of floor markings to indicate physical distancing , barriers etc.
 - Limit large gatherings
- Limiting Sharing
 - To the greatest extent possible, schools will limit sharing of objects, resources, etc.
 - Procedures for enhanced cleaning/personal hygiene will be implemented when sharing of objects etc. is unavoidable (i.e. Keyboards, Sports equipment)
 - Parents are encouraged to send individual supplies for personal use, whenever possible
- Screening, identification, isolation and support for students and staff with symptoms
 - Schools will maintain records of students with pre-existing conditions
 - Strict stay-at-home policy for students and staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19
 - All students and staff are to self screen daily using the [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire](#).
 - An isolation room will be available for students who become symptomatic at school
 - Procedures for staff who become symptomatic during the school day
 - Schools will provide continuity of learning (learning-at-home)
 - Schools will have access to No Touch Thermometers to use when required
 - Additional screening protocols will be linked when available here
- Management of entry into schools
 - Routine screening of all staff and students
 - Limiting/restricting of visitors and volunteers
 - Clear expectations for service providers, visitors, deliveries and parents
 - Expectations / procedures for drop-off / pick-up of students

Student Transportation

Parkland School Division will implement Student Transportation protocols:

- Students will have assigned seating and the seating plan may be based on the order of pick up in the mornings. (First pickups would be seated at the rear of the bus and continue forward to avoid students walking past each other regardless of Grades.)
- Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting, including a cleaning log to be kept on the bus. High-touch surface areas will be cleaned several times a day and regularly scheduled deep cleaning will occur when students are not present.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided for all drivers. This may include masks, gloves or perhaps a face shield. Any PPE in use cannot interfere with the safe operation of the school bus.
- Procedures are in place for responding when a child becomes symptomatic during a bus trip

For more on Parkland School Division’s Transportation Services measures, click [here](#).

Student and Staff Mental Health

Parkland School Division will implement measures to support the mental well-being of staff and students.

- PSD identifies Wellness Culture as one of our enduring priorities with a commitment to students’ mental health and physical literacy. Confident Resilience is another enduring priority: *The Division believes that confident, adaptable and resilient students are successful students.* To that end:
 - Key strategies and structures have been defined to address these priorities.
- Anxiety is caused in part by uncertainty and or fear about the present and future. Teachers will help students to know and understand the facts about the pandemic and to accept new social norms regarding:
 - Care for those who are ill or isolated
 - Physical distancing
 - Masks
 - Use of technology (for communication and learning)

Additional Protocols are under development and will be linked here when available.

Resources for Staff and Students to support mental health:

- [AHS Resource for Families with Kids at Home](#)
- [Building Resilient Families Resource](#)
- [Engaging Your Kids Without Going Crazy](#)

- [Talking With Your Child About COVID-19](#)
- [Things To Do At Home Booklet](#)

Students Requiring Specialized Supports and Services

A number of students may require additional measures to ensure their safety during re-entry. If a student requires specialized supports and services that require close contact with a teacher or educational assistant such as positioning, restraint, assistance with daily living skills (toileting, tube feeding), physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy strategies, communication, mobility or hand over hand instruction, additional guidelines should be followed. These guidelines include:

- Establish cleaning protocols for specialized equipment
- Mandatory screening for staff and students prior to participation in the educational environment
- Cohort staffing and student grouping
- No sharing of personal student supplies (i.e. students requiring toileting should each have their own wet wipes)
- Communication devices, wheelchairs etc. have clearly defined cleaning schedules
- Personal protective equipment for staff (access to gloves, gowns and masks or shields)
- Safety plans for students who spit, run or bite must be developed

Additional Protocols are under development and will be linked here when available.

Communication Protocols

Parkland School Division will implement communication systems and protocols:

- Messages that are important and relevant to ALL stakeholders will be communicated broadly through the use of the school division and school websites (including posts to division and school Facebook pages and Twitter accounts). The most up to date information regarding COVID-19 and the School Re-entry plan can be found at <https://www.psd70.ab.ca/News.php>.
- In addition, Parkland School Division will continue to communicate directly with parents via email. It's important to have all your contact information up-to-date in the PowerSchool parent portal so you don't miss out on any important information. Any questions regarding COVID-19 or the School Re-entry Plan should be directed to divisionoffice@psd70.ab.ca.

PPE

All staff and students in Grade 4 to Grade 12 will be required to wear a mask in all common areas in schools and on the school bus. All students and staff will be provided with reusable masks. Face shields will also be provided to staff who require a face shield in addition to a mask.

More information on masks can be found [here](#).

Educational Options

PSD recognizes a number of families may not feel comfortable returning to in person classes due to the risk of COVID-19.

Parkland School Division has a number of educational options available:

- In-person Classes with additional safety measures
- 'Stay-at-Home' blended learning environment where students work at home on teacher directed work until students return to school. Students work at home but remain registered at their local school. Activities, order of instruction is coordinated between the distance teacher and the classroom based teacher to accommodate for the eventual return to school.
- Full homeschool options, either teacher directed distance learning or parent directed home school through Connections for Learning.

Those students who choose Option 2 and wish to re-enter the classroom, may do so on the following dates:

- Monday, October 5
- Monday, November 16
- Monday, January 4
- Tuesday, February 16
- Wednesday, April 7

High school students may change from Option 2 to Option 1 at the semester breaks during the quarter semester school year.

- Monday, August 31
- Monday, November 16
- Monday, February 1
- Thursday, April 22

The educational options available to PSD families can be found [here](#).

Additional Resources and Documents

- [PSD Working From Home/Alternative Workplace Guidelines](#)
- [Supplementary Educational Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Educational Resources](#)
- [PSD's COVID-19 Resource Document Folder](#)

Appendix A - Screening Questionnaire

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS MUST USE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DAILY TO DECIDE IF THE STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL.

This tool has been developed to support schools, activity organizers, employers, businesses and facility operators in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees/staff. The tool is meant to be used to assist with assessing attendees who may be symptomatic, or who may have been exposed to someone who is ill or has confirmed COVID-19.

Attendees should complete this checklist prior to participating in the activity or program. Children and youth may need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

If an individual answers **YES** to any of the questions, they **must not** be allowed to attend or participate in the activity or program. *Individuals with fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat, are required to isolate for 10 days per [CMOH Order 05-2020](#) unless they receive a negative COVID-19 test and are feeling better. Use the [AHS Online Assessment Tool](#) to determine if testing is recommended and follow information on [isolation requirements](#).

A copy DOES NOT need to be submitted to the school each day unless requested to do so (based on individual school/program needs).

RISK ASSESSMENT: INITIAL SCREENING QUESTIONS

1.	Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following	CIRCLE ONE	
		YES	NO
	· Fever*	YES	NO
	· Cough*	YES	NO
	· Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing*	YES	NO
	· Runny nose*	YES	NO
	· Sore throat*	YES	NO
	· Chills	YES	NO
	· Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	· Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion	YES	NO
	· Feeling unwell / Fatigued	YES	NO
	· Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	· Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	· Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	· Muscle/ Joint aches	YES	NO
	· Headache	YES	NO
	· Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	YES	NO
2.	Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Has the attendee had close contact** with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
4.	Has the attendee had close contact with an individual who has any one of the first 5 symptoms on this list (shaded) AND who is a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO

**Individuals legally required to quarantine for 14 days when entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada

*** Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in a occupational setting wearing recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

If you have answered “**Yes**” to any of the above questions, please **DO NOT** enter the school at this time. You should stay home and use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19.

If you have answered “**No**” to all the above questions, you may attend school.

Appendix B - Mask Protocol

As part of a number of new school safety measures to combat COVID-19, mask use for all Alberta Grade 4 to 12 students, and all school staff, will be mandatory across Alberta when school returns for the 2020-21 year.

COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who have not yet, or who may never develop symptoms. Masks, including homemade cloth masks or non-medical face masks, are another way to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and are recommended in areas where physical distancing may be challenging or not possible.

Mandatory Mask Use: Staff and Students (Grades 4 through 12) and optional for students in Kindergarten through Grade 3.

- Mask use will be required (Grades 4 through 12) whenever and wherever students are instructed to wear a mask.
- Acknowledging that maintaining 2 metres of distancing between individuals will be challenging in many situations, PSD is recommending that mask be worn at all times.
- Masks are not required while students are seated in the classroom during instruction if additional measures are in place. (i.e.; if students are all facing in the same direction and working alone at their desks.)
- There may be situations within classrooms where masks may be needed based on the activity – as instructed by the teacher. (i.e.; group work, labs, close collaboration on projects)
- Masks are required:
 - in the classroom when close contact between students, or students and staff, is occurring. Masks should be used for the duration of this activity;
 - on the bus at all times and when in bus transfer sites outside;
 - in school areas where students or staff may be moving or crossing paths with other students or staff;
 - in hallways (including while at lockers) and entry points;
 - in washrooms;
 - in common gathering areas; and
 - in any areas that clearly indicate (by a sign) that masks are required.
- Masks may be removed for outside activities that involve considerable social distancing.
- The Principal of the school may determine other programming or activities that apply sufficient additional physical distancing measures to allow students to remove their masks for the duration of the activity.
- The Principal of the school may determine other programming or activities where masks are mandatory. (i.e.; drama productions, musical programming such as choir, foods options, etc.)

Additional Mask Protocols

- Alberta is providing each student and staff member with two reusable masks. Delivery of these masks to students is expected on their first day of school. Families are also welcome to supply their own masks, if preferred, providing that the mask is appropriate:
 - A bandana, scarf or neck gaiter may be used providing it can cover your mouth, nose and sides of the face while remaining securely in place;
 - For reference, see also - Alberta Government: Types of Masks and Eye Protection; and
 - For reference, see also - Health Canada: Sew and No-Sew Instructions.
- The mask needs to fully cover your face from the nose (above the nostrils) to the chin and be worn without gaps between the mask and face.
 - See also: Alberta Government: Guidance for Wearing Non-Medical Masks
- Masks that are visibly dirty, ripped, torn or damaged in any way shall be replaced with a temporary mask by the school during the day, and by the family for the next day;
 - Schools are supplied with disposable (temporary) masks to distribute to students.
- Before putting on a mask, hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol;
- It is recommended students carry a plastic, sealable bag (i.e.; Ziploc bag) to store the mask when not in use.
- When non-medical face masks are used, hands should be cleaned before and after putting it on and taking it off. Avoid touching the mask once it is on. Masks should be changed after they become wet or soiled.
- After removing a reusable non-medical face mask that will be reworn prior to washing, it should be placed into a clean, breathable bag or container (allows for evaporation) for storage. Consider using a bag that can be washed. All masks should have two distinct sides, one side that touches the face and one that faces outwards.
- Do not reuse masks that are wet or soiled prior to laundering. A wet or soiled mask that requires laundering should be placed into a sealed bag or container where it is stored until it can be taken home and washed.
- Disposable masks that are damaged or dirty should be discarded into a garbage bin that is lined with a plastic bag.
- A very small number of individuals may not be able to wear masks due to sensory or health issues. Face shields are not considered to be equivalent to non-medical face masks. It is important to comply with other personal preventative practices such as frequent hand hygiene and physical distancing as much as possible.
- While it is certainly okay to use or have creative fabrics or designs on masks, your mask must follow guidelines for appropriateness as provided for in the school's dress code (i.e., no inappropriate messages or graphics).

- Exemptions to mask requirement for all teachers and staff in all school settings and students in grades 4-12 include:
 - Persons who are unable to place, use or remove a non-medical face mask without assistance;
 - Persons unable to wear a non-medical face mask due to a mental or physical concern or limitation;
 - Persons consuming food or drink in designated areas;

Parents can support their children by practicing mask wearing at home and by reinforcing that masks help us all stay safe and healthy. We truly appreciate our families, staff, students and community efforts to keep everyone in good health.

Appendix C - Transportation Services COVID-19 Measures

Parents are encouraged to review and consider all provincial and local measures in order to make an informed decision when deciding on Transportation for their child(ren). The final decision on whether to access the service is entirely parents discretion. These strategies include:

Parents should note that due to the current pandemic, there may be times when a driver is ill and the route cannot run. Transportation routes may be cancelled on short notice due to driver / staff sickness. We will endeavor to keep parents updated but strongly encourage you to monitor the PSD website, Transportation page, “Bus Status” for the most up to date information.

Procedures

- Students from the same house will be seated together where possible.
- Students will have assigned seating and the seating plan will be based on the order of pick up in the mornings. (First pickups seated at the rear of the bus and continue forward to avoid students walking past each other regardless of grades age)
- All riders must scan their RFID bus pass to electronically record their attendance on the bus when entering and leaving the bus.
- Seating plans will be MANDATORY and strictly enforced by all drivers in order to facilitate contact tracing should there be a student that contracts COVID-19. No deviations are allowed.
- If possible, the seat behind the driver will be kept empty.
- Items such as iPads, iPhone and books along with other electronic items should not be shared with other students.
- All waste items (e.g. Kleenex etc) should be kept with the student and disposed of at home or at the school and should not be discarded on the bus.

Personal Protective Equipment

- As per the Chief Medical Officer of Health’s recommendation on mask-wearing – All Alberta students in grades four (4) to grade Twelve (12) will be required to wear masks on ALL SCHOOL BUSES. Parents with child(ren) in grades Kindergarten (K) to Three (3) are strongly encouraged to have their child(ren) wear a mask on the school bus due to the difficulty of maintaining physical distancing of two (2) metres at all times. Physical distancing of 2 metres will not be possible on our buses.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be required by all drivers. This will include masks, and may include gloves or a face shield. Driver’s may be removing their mask / pulling it down when they are driving, this is to avoid any potential vision impairment. Any PPE in use cannot interfere with the safe operation of the school bus.

Enhanced Cleaning & Hygiene

- Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting including a cleaning log to be kept on the bus. High touch surface areas will be cleaned several times a day and regular deep cleaning will occur when students are not present.
- Good hand hygiene is expected for both drivers and students, this may include wearing of gloves and use of hand sanitizer products.
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS will be allowed to be consumed on the bus journey regardless of the duration of the trip.

Parent & Student Responsibilities

- The COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire shall be reviewed each day by all school staff and students prior to coming to school. Students should not enter the bus if they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. Be sure that the self-screening tool has been used each day prior to leaving for the school bus.
- Students in Grades 4-12 are required to wear face masks on the bus. Bus drivers will have a very limited number of disposable face masks for emergency situations only.
- If a child becomes symptomatic during the bus trip, the driver will make the appropriate arrangements for the student. Where possible the parents will be contacted to meet the bus on the route, or the student will be transported to school and the school will isolate the student until the parents arrive.

Screening

- Strict stay at home policy for any students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. (even if symptoms resemble a mild cold)
- If a child becomes symptomatic during the bus trip, the driver, in coordination with Transportation Services dispatch, will make the appropriate arrangements for the student. If possible the parent will be contacted to meet the bus at a point on the bus route to take their child(ren). If the parent cannot meet the bus at a point on the route, the child(ren) will be transported to the school and isolated until a parent can pick them up. If a child(ren) gets sick on the way home again the parent will be contacted to try and meet the bus at a point on the route, if this is not possible the driver where possible will try to isolate the child/ student to avoid any contact with other students until arriving home. The students will be instructed to stay home and use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19.
- Parent should have a contingency plan for their child(ren) should they exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms before the school bus pickup time. Child(ren) should not be placed on the school bus if they are sick or feeling sick due to the possible spread of the infection.
- NO GUEST RIDERS will be permitted on any PSD buses. Only designated registered riders for their transfer and home buses, with a valid bus pass, will be allowed to board the buses.

Transfer Sites

- Parents and children/students should not be in the stop pick-up area / Transfer sites or enter the bus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Transfer sites will have a directional flow that all student will be required to follow to maximize social distancing.
- Additional staff members will be added to all transfer sites to assist children/ students navigate the areas and to avoid crowding where possible.
- Buses will be cleaned after every run; particular attention will be paid to the high touch point areas.
- Buses will have a wipe down of high touch area after the transfer students have vacated the bus. This will be completed before new transfer students are permitted to enter the bus
- Schools should develop procedures for student loading, unloading and transfers that support physical distancing of 2 metres between all persons (except household members), when possible.
- Masks will be mandatory for all Grades 4 – 12 students even outside at the Transfer Sites. Mask use for kindergarten to grade 3 students will continue to be optional.

There is no guarantee that physical distancing will happen on any of the PSD school buses, parents should consider this when choosing to place their child(ren) on the school bus.

Contractors

- Will instruct drivers on the correct use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment. (PPE). PPE could include a face mask, face shield and nitrile gloves. Parkland School Division will provide drivers with 2 reusable masks prior to the first day of school.
- Should have secured on the bus, a spray bottle of a disinfectant solution in order to clean the bus after the morning and afternoon runs. Please note that both an MSDS (safety sheet for your disinfectant product) and a cleaning log will be required to be on the bus at all times. Transfer bus drivers will also need to conduct a quick wipe down of the high touch point areas after transfer students have exited the bus and before the new transfer students are permitted to enter the bus
- ASSIGNED seating plans are MANDATORY for all students and transfer students, no exceptions to this will be permitted. Please ensure all your drivers including spare drivers, adhere to this requirement. A record of these seating plans or any additions or modifications to the seating plans must be recorded and kept for the purposes of contact tracing.
- Bus drivers assisting students with high needs will be issued a face shield by PSD to be used when necessary while loading /unloading the bus.

Appendix D - Educational Options for 2020-2021

Parkland School Division will be offering a number of options to meet the needs of our students and families as we return to in-person classes. We understand that many families are concerned about a full-return to in-person classes and we are preparing options for families who wish to have students continue to work at home starting in September while still remaining enrolled in their designated school. Please consider the following options as you make an informed decision for your child and family.

Option 1 - Return to In-person Classes with Additional Safety Protocols

Schools will implement a number of public health measures, which include frequent cleaning of surfaces, placing hand sanitizers at school entrances and classrooms, grouping students in cohorts, and planning the school day to allow for physical distancing, which will include staggering start times for classes, recesses and lunches wherever possible. Additional public health measures may be established prior to September on the advice of the chief medical officer of health in consultation with the education system. More detail:

[PSD's 2020-2021 Return to School Re-entry Plan](#)
[Guidance for School Re-entry - Principal's Handbook](#)

In addition, students, staff, parents and school visitors will be expected to use a [self-screening questionnaire](#) daily to determine whether they can enter the school.

There will also be mandatory mask use for students in grades 4 to 12, as well as all school staff. Staff will be required to wear masks in all settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained, and students will be required to wear them in all shared and common areas, such as hallways and on buses. Mask use for kindergarten to grade 3 students will continue to be optional.

Every single Kindergarten to Grade 12 student will be supplied with two reusable masks. This will ensure that students who are required to wear masks will have them, and will allow for our Kindergarten to Grade 3 students to have masks should they wish to wear them.

Option 2 - Teacher supported At-Home Learning (Through Your Designated School)

Under option 2, students will remain enrolled at their home/local school and be provided teacher directed learning activities but continue to work at home.

Option 2 is intended for families who have decided that they are not ready to return to in-person classes under Option 1, but intend to re-enter the classroom at some point.

Under this option, students will have an assigned teacher who directs the learning activities, provides assistance, and sets a schedule of learning activities and will ensure that the curriculum is being followed in a similar fashion to those students who are attending regular classes at school. As program delivery will take place online, participating families will need to provide their own internet access, as well as one dedicated device with a webcam per student.

Learning expectations and time commitments will be more rigorous compared to the emergency learning implemented during the COVID response from March - June of 2020. It's expected that the curriculum pace will be the same as in the regular classroom. This will facilitate the return of students to school when parents deem it safe to do so and ensure all students are on pace to complete the required curricular outcomes.

Those students who choose Option 2 and wish to re-enter the classroom, may do so on the following dates:

- Monday, October 5
- Monday, November 16
- Monday, January 4
- Tuesday, February 16
- Wednesday, April 7

High school students may change from Option 2 to Option 1 at the term breaks during the quarter term school year:

- Monday, August 31
- Monday, November 16
- Monday, February 1
- Thursday, April 22

To summarize, this option has been created for those families who have a student or students who would be at school if the COVID-19 pandemic did not exist.

Option 3 - Virtual Learning at Connections for Learning (CFL)

Parents may consider a full-time online delivery program for Grade 1-12 education, which will operate out of the Connections for Learning alternative education site. Virtual Learning will be a teacher-directed program that will allow students to work from home via online learning tools and remote access to content. As program delivery will take place online, participating families will need to provide their own Internet access, as well as one dedicated device with a webcam per student.

This program is best suited to students who are comfortable working independently in an online environment, with parents/guardians who are able to provide their students with the tools, supervision and support they will need to be successful.

Please Note: This program is not designed or intended for the purpose of responding to in-school class cancellation due to COVID-19. This is a full-time program with a full-year commitment for those who prefer to learn in this manner.

Learning expectations and time commitments will be more rigorous compared to the emergency learning implemented during the COVID response from March - June of 2020. It's expected that the curriculum pace will be the same as in the regular classroom.

Please note: for families that do not have internet access or technology, please select Option 3 and then contact Connections for Learning to discuss print-based options.

For more information, click [here](#).

Option 4 - Home Education (Parent-directed program with support through Connections For Learning.)

Families can choose to educate their children entirely at home. This is a parent-directed program with access to teacher support. Parents can select curriculum, resources and methodology consistent with their family's beliefs. We encourage parents to set a curriculum that aligns with their values, and provide learning opportunities specifically designed for their child. With a partnership with Connections for Learning, Home Education families have access to the same opportunities experienced through CFL's other programs, such as workshops, community learning events, field trips and more. In addition, our Home Education Program employs a certificated teacher who can help parents plan their child's program and provide educational support to homeschooling families throughout the school year.

For further information, click [here](#).

Appendix E - Enhanced Cleaning Protocol

Cleaning and disinfecting expectations are now increased for the safety of all staff and students in our schools and facilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Cleaning uses soaps or detergents to physically remove germs from surfaces.

Disinfecting uses chemicals to eliminate germs on surfaces after they have been properly cleaned.

Keeping our spaces clean is a shared responsibility.

A great practice to follow to keep our spaces clean is to ensure that you are leaving the space in better shape than when you first entered. **“Leave it better than you found it!”**. Our custodians are better able to attend to deep disinfecting if we all do our best to keep our areas clean.

Ensuring that your hands are clean is the best way to ensure you don’t get sick or spread viruses or germs to others. It’s recommended that regular hand-washing occur with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Cleaning Frequency

Always remember to consider the safe handling of cleaning products and consider whether or not they need to be stored safely away from children.

Everyone must do their part to keep our areas clean. Some items that require deep cleaning or chemicals must be attended to by the custodian. The chart below lists frequency and responsibility for cleaning items or places. There is no way to add every item in a school to this list, but it should help to provide an idea of how to keep our schools clean.

Custodial The custodian attends to deep cleaning and disinfecting. The custodian is ultimately responsible for the school’s cleaning products and will provide the appropriate product as required (ie., class cleaning disinfectants).

Staff (all staff as able to do so): attend to wiping down surfaces and keeping areas clean. Gentle cleaning products are available for use. This category includes the custodian and staff are to assist as able to do so. In particular, the custodian needs to attend to deep cleaning, so staff can assist by reducing or eliminating non-essential items from the classroom.

Everyone (staff, students and volunteers) do their part to keep surfaces clean.

School administration will discuss cleaning protocols and hand-washing protocols with staff and students as necessary. Some areas of the school may need more frequent cleaning and disinfecting. All staff should understand the cleaning products and items that are available to them, and those that are only to be used by the custodian.

Schools may modify their schedules to ensure that proper cleaning takes place.

Surfaces that are soiled or dirty need to be cleaned immediately (with approved PSD cleaning products only).

Surfaces that are soiled by bodily fluids or blood need to be attended to with gloves and other necessary precautions. The affected area needs to be cleaned and disinfected.

In order to minimize the amount of cleaning and disinfecting that is required, to the greatest extent possible, sharing of items should be avoided.

Wherever and whenever possible, eliminate the use of shared objects.

- Personal items should only be handled by the owner.
- Items should be labeled as there is an ability to do so.
- If items do need to be shared, they must be cleaned between users

The following chart provides examples of school spaces or items. Each school should consider their own processes.

Areas that are clean and uncluttered ensure that the custodian can attend to deep cleaning. Keeping our spaces clean is a shared responsibility.

Item to be cleaned or disinfected	Frequency	Responsibility
Hallway door handles and knobs	Often throughout day	Custodian
Water fountains	Often throughout day	Custodian
Light switches (once on, leave on).	Often throughout day	School Staff
Pencil sharpener handles	Often throughout day	School Staff
Shared electronics (ie., printers, keyboards)	Often throughout day	School Staff
Hand railings	Often throughout day	Custodian
Elevator buttons	Often throughout day	Custodian
Common area items (ie., telephones)	Often throughout day	Custodian
Instructional resources	After use	School Staff
Musical instruments	After use	School Staff
Cafeteria / lunch room chairs and tables	After use	Everyone
Toys, games, manipulatives, etc.	After use	School Staff
Personal items (staff and students)	As required	Everyone
Physical education equipment	After use	Everyone

Places to be cleaned or disinfected	Frequency	Responsibility
General classrooms	As required	Everyone
Washrooms	Often throughout day	Custodian
Infirmary / Sick Room	As required after use	Custodian
Specialized classrooms	Between cohorts	School Staff
Hallways (including hallway walls)	Every evening	Custodian
Physical Education spaces	Between cohorts	School Staff
Office / kitchen / staff spaces	As required	School Staff
Lockers	As required	Everyone (students are responsible for the inside of their lockers).

Other Procedures

- Day-time custodians will be available during relaunch to assist with enhanced cleaning.
 - School principals should meet with day-time custodians to develop site-based plans for cleaning.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (i.e. door handles, water fountain push buttons/knobs) within the school as frequently as possible based on school cleaning protocol developed with custodians/facilities.
- To the greatest extent possible, minimize the need to touch surfaces by implementing measures such as propping doors open, etc.
- Disinfectant/cleaning supplies will be available in all classrooms, teaching spaces, meeting rooms for ongoing cleaning between users.
- Individuals are asked to clean individual work spaces (i.e. teacher desk) following use and before using a new work space.
 - Where appropriate, students will be asked to wipe down individual work spaces (for instance, a teacher could spray desks and ask students to wipe the surface with paper towel).
- Schools are to increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening doors or windows where practical.
- All non-essential 'soft surfaces' (area rugs, pillows) that cannot be easily cleaned must be removed from classrooms.
 - Some soft surfaces may be required for educational programming (i.e.; seating, mobility or accessibility devices). Schools should develop additional protocols around these essential items.

Appendix F - Staff and Students School Entry Protocol

This School Entry Protocol is ONLY for those school staff members and students who attend the school on a regular basis. Visitors, volunteers and staff members who are not regularly in school should review and sign the *Visitor Entry Protocol*.

COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who have not yet, or who may never develop symptoms. It is our shared responsibility to ensure our staff and students are healthy in school. This Facility Entry Protocol exists as part of a number of new school safety measures to combat COVID-19. The health questionnaire supports a transition toward a culture where our staff and students stay home when they are ill. The strategy is built on a foundation of awareness, trust and shared responsibility.

Mask use is mandatory for all Alberta Grade 4 to 12 students, and all school staff, visitors and volunteers as per Ministerial direction. Please refer to the [Parkland School Division Mask Protocol](#).

The COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire shall be reviewed each day by all school staff and students prior to coming to school. No paper documents will be submitted by parents/guardians. It is not necessary for schools to keep a daily copy of this questionnaire.

Answering “yes” to any of these questions means that an individual must complete the Alberta Health Services Online Assessment tool and follow the directions. The results from the Alberta Health Services [Online Assessment Tool](#) will determine whether or not you may enter the school.

In Alberta, individuals are **LEGALLY REQUIRED** to self-isolate if:

- You test positive for COVID-19.
- You have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- You have been in contact with someone known to have COVID-19.
- You have travelled outside Canada within the last 14 days.

In Alberta, individuals **DO NOT** have to self-isolate if:

- You are awaiting asymptomatic test results (in this case, you have none of the symptoms listed).
- You have no symptoms of illness.
- You have symptoms of illness that are related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- You have tested negative for COVID-19.
- You have tested negative for COVID-19 and have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. We do always suggest you stay home when sick with any illness, until symptoms resolve; however, if your COVID test is negative, this is not legally required.

Screening Requirements for School Entry – Parkland School Division

- Each day, staff and students must consider the questions on the Fit for School Assessment (below) before coming to school.
- It is the ongoing responsibility of staff and students to comply with the screening requirements.
- It is the responsibility of parents and staff to help their children comply with the screening requirements.
- Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

Answering “yes” to any of these questions means that an individual must complete the Alberta Health Services [Online Assessment tool](#) and follow the directions. The results from the online Assessment Tool will determine whether or not you may enter the school.

1.	Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following:?	YES	NO
	Fever*		
	Cough*		
	Shortness of breath / Difficulty breathing*		
	Runny nose*		
	Sore throat*		
	Chills		
	Painful swallowing		
	Nasal congestion		
	Feeling unwell / Fatigued		
	Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea		
	Unexplained loss of appetite		
	Loss of sense of taste or smell		
	Muscle / Joint aches		
	Headache		
	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)		
2.	Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?		
3.	Has the attendee had close contact** with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		
4.	Has the attendee had close contact with an individual who has any one of the first 5 symptoms on this list (shaded) AND who is a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		

**Individuals legally required to quarantine for 14 days when entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada

*** Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in an occupational setting wearing recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

If you have answered “Yes” to any of the above questions, please **DO NOT** enter the school at this time **UNTIL YOU USE** the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19 or self-isolate.

If testing is recommended (student):

- Provide notice to the school (through the school’s attendance system) that your child will be absent from school.
- Schedule a COVID-19 test as soon as possible:
<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>
- You may return to school pending the results of the test (no COVID detected).

If testing is recommended (school staff)

- Provide notice to school administration that you are expecting to be absent and make appropriate accommodation through your school administration.
- Schedule a COVID-19 test as soon as possible:
<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>
- You may return to school pending the results of the test (no COVID detected).

Appendix G - Visitor Entry Protocol for PSD School Sites

A 'visitor' is someone who does not regularly work or attend the school or site they are visiting. This includes all visitors, volunteers and staff members who are not assigned to, or not regularly within the school or site.

COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who have not yet, or who may never develop symptoms. It is our shared responsibility to ensure our schools and sites remain healthy. This Visitor Entry Protocol exists as part of a number of new school safety measures to combat COVID-19. The health questionnaire supports a transition toward a culture where everyone recognizes the shared responsibility to keep our Parkland School Division family safe. The strategy is built on a foundation of awareness, trust and shared responsibility.

Mask use is mandatory for all Alberta Grade 4 to 12 students, and all school staff, visitors and volunteers as per Ministerial direction. Please refer to the [Parkland School Division Mask Protocol](#).

Again, visitor screening shall be applied to all visitors, volunteers and staff who are not regularly in the school or site. Basically, **if the building you are entering is not your regular place to be – then you will need to fill out and sign the attached form.**

If you have answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, please DO NOT enter the school at this time UNTIL YOU USE the [Alberta Health Services Online Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19 or self-isolate.

In Alberta, individuals are legally required to self-isolate if:

- You test positive for COVID-19.
- You have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- You have been in contact with someone known to have COVID-19.
- You have travelled outside Canada within the last 14 days.

In Alberta, individuals do not have to self-isolate if:

- You are awaiting asymptomatic test results.
- You have no symptoms of illness.
- You have symptoms of illness that are related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- You have tested negative for COVID-19.
- You have tested negative for COVID-19 and have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. We do always suggest you stay home when sick with any illness, until symptoms resolve; however, if your COVID test is negative, this is not legally required.

Screening Requirements for School or Site Entry – Parkland School Division

- Any service provider, contractor, visitor or volunteer entering a school or Parkland School Division site must complete the COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire.
- Staff members who visit a school or site that is not their regular place of business must also complete and sign this form.
- A copy of the completed Screening Questionnaire shall be kept on file.
- Screening shall be completed in a manner that maintains physical distancing and avoids contact as much as possible.
- Individuals who do not comply with the completion of the screening form will be denied access to the school or site.

- Screening shall be completed in a manner that treats individuals with respect and dignity, providing them with information so that the reasons for screening are well-understood.
- Children and youth who may be visitors to a school or site will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

If you have answered “Yes” to any of the below questions, please DO NOT enter the school at this time UNTIL YOU USE the [Alberta Health Services Online Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19 or self-isolate.

1.	Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following:?	YES	NO
	Fever*		
	Cough*		
	Shortness of breath / Difficulty breathing*		
	Runny nose*		
	Sore throat*		
	Chills		
	Painful swallowing		
	Nasal congestion		
	Feeling unwell / Fatigued		
	Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea		
	Unexplained loss of appetite		
	Loss of sense of taste or smell		
	Muscle / Joint aches		
	Headache		
	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)		
2.	Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?		
3.	Has the attendee had close contact** with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		
4.	Has the attendee had close contact with an individual who has any one of the first 5 symptoms on this list (shaded) AND who is a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		

**Individuals legally required to quarantine for 14 days when entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada

*** Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in a occupational setting wearing recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

Reason for entering the school (include location, names of staff, students who you will be in contact with, etc.). Your details help us in the event of an outbreak.		

NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

Appendix H - Responding to Illness

Students will return to school daily at the beginning of the new school year. There are health measures that everyone has to follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and help stay safe. This Responding to Illness protocol will be in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While your school will develop a plan to meet the government's health recommendations, everyone will have a role to play.

School staff should ask students daily if they have self-screened (where appropriate). Students should stay at home if they feel sick or if they are in contact with someone who is sick. However, the division recognizes that there will be instances that occur where a student only starts exhibiting symptoms after they arrive at school.

If a student shows symptoms at school:

- parents will be contacted to pick up the child immediately (ensure your school has up-to-date contact information). All care and compassion will be used to respect the student's privacy.
- student will be required to wear a mask and be isolated in a separate room or kept at least 2 metres away from others
- Schools will ensure that all parents provide names and information of two emergency contacts with the understanding that these individuals would be expected to pick up a sick child in a timely manner if they become symptomatic.

If a school has a confirmed positive case:

- the zone medical officer of health will work with school authorities to quickly:
 - identify when symptoms developed
 - identify and contact people who had close contact with the person who tested positive, offer testing, and set the isolation measures:
 - people are legally required to [isolate](#) for 14 days if they live with or are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19
 - only people in direct contact with a confirmed case need to isolate
- Under the direction of Alberta Health Services, Parkland School Division will:
 - notify staff and parents if a case is confirmed at school
 - support students and staff to learn or work at home if they are required to self-isolate
 - contact tracing, investigations and notifications will be conducted under the direction of Alberta Health Services

If a school has 2 or more cases:

- the school would be considered to have an outbreak by Alberta Health Services
 - medical officers will assess the spread and exposure risk to determine if it affects multiple grades and areas, or is confined within close contacts of a confirmed case, and provide specific recommendations – an outbreak will not automatically lead to school closure
-
- If the student requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the student until the parent is able to pick up the student. Staff should wear a mask during all interactions with the student and should avoid contact with the student's respiratory secretions.
 - Staff/students must wash their hands before donning a mask and before and after removing the mask (as per [mask guidance](#)), and before and after touching any items used by the student.
 - All items the student touched/used while isolated must be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the student has been picked up. Items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected should be removed from the classroom and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 10 days.

- The room used to isolate must be appropriately cleaned and disinfected following use.

Pre-existing conditions (that could present as symptoms of COVID-19)

A number of students and staff may have conditions (i.e.; allergies, asthma, other medical conditions) that may present symptoms similar to COVID-19.

- If the student or staff member has pre-existing conditions, they should be tested at least once before returning to school and have a negative COVID-19 test result. These symptoms would be their baseline health status.
- If symptoms present themselves that would be consistent with the pre-existing condition, (i.e.; runny nose from allergies) as long as the cough or runny nose is always the same and does not get worse, the student can attend school.
- You will need to inform the school (with appropriate documentation) of your child's pre-existing condition.
- If the symptoms from the pre-existing condition, (i.e.; runny nose, etc.) worsens, students will be required to stay home for the required amount of time or get tested for COVID-19.

Testing Family Members

If a child is being tested for COVID-19, it does not necessarily mean that immediate family members will have to self-isolate. If you check yes on the PSD Self Screening Questionnaire, it does not automatically mean you require a COVID test or need to self-isolate. If you check yes, you are required to complete the AHS COVID-19 Self-Assessment (found [here](#)) **and follow the direction from AHS**. Currently, the AHS guidelines do not require family members to self-isolate or get a COVID test unless a family member has tested positive. If in doubt, we recommend calling 811.

School Procedures

- Schools should ensure that all parents provide names and information of two emergency contacts with the understanding that these individuals would be expected to pick up a sick child in a timely manner if they become symptomatic.
- Schools should ensure they establish an appropriately located 'infirmary' to accommodate students exhibiting symptoms while they wait for parent/emergency contact pickup.
- 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.
- If two or more staff/students within a cohort are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the school should follow outbreak notification procedures as per AHS zone protocols. In such an event, principals must contact Division Office.
- Staff exhibiting symptoms will be required to go home and complete the AHS self-assessment and follow direction from AHS.

Any school authority/school connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 will be contacted by Alberta Health Services (AHS) and may be required to close in-person classes to allow the public health investigation to take place. The decision to send a cohort/class home or to close a school will be made in consultation with the local Medical Officer of Health.

Appendix I - Staff Guide for Mental Health

Returning to School: Understanding the Student Response

The COVID-19 Pandemic has resulted in a severe short-term disruption felt by families around the world resulting in a shock to families, children’s social life and learning (Burgess and Sievertsen April 2020). Students are coming back to class having experienced this pandemic in many different ways. For children and adolescents with mental health needs, school closures may mean a lack of access to the resources they usually have through schools; reduced access to mental health support; and a reduction in peer support (Lee, April 2020). For some, there will be considerable difficulties adjusting back to normal life when school resumes. While other students have thrived in the learning from home environment, enjoying the reduced stress that comes from the simplicity of life during the pandemic and building stronger bonds with family and guardians. We know that students will be returning with their unique experiences, both positive and negative. We also know that their responses to this crisis may be influenced by many factors including past experiences, the age of the child, availability of social support systems etc. The purpose of this document is to provide some tips when supporting your students who are returning to school in the coming weeks.

As teachers returning to our students in school, it is important is to listen, be present and communicate as a staff, so that we tackle overarching concerns together (like social distancing in school, sanitizing etc.). Responding to school-resumption challenges during this period is unique because everyone is affected by the pandemic but being responsive to kids’ needs is not new to us. So really, you’ve got this!

If there are students struggling in your class, you are not alone, please feel free to consult with your school-based teams. We are all supporting our students together and we can move forward together with kindness and compassion. Thank you for taking the time to reflect!

Tuning into our Students and Providing Support

“Resilience can help us get through and overcome hardship. But resilience is not something we are born with—it’s built over time as the experiences we have interact with our unique, individual genetic makeup. That is why we all respond to stress and adversity—like that from the COVID-19 pandemic—differently. Think of resilience as a seesaw or balance scale, where negative experiences tip the scale toward bad outcomes, and positive experiences tip it toward good outcomes.” (Centre of the Developing Child, Harvard University)

What Helps Students?

- Listening and giving students the opportunity to express their feelings.
- Encouraging students to engage in physical activity (while social distancing) to release anger/frustration.
- Encouraging journaling, writing, talking etc.
- Assisting students to identify support systems.
- Listen, empathize and normalize. Make sure you hear what is said and not what you think.
- Creating Structure and Routine. Reducing unpredictability of outcomes. Maintaining this sense of continuity

in your class will comfort students in their regular routines.

- Focusing on what gives hope.
- Allowing students to express emotions through art.
- Being prepared to answer some basic questions.
- Develop a warm and trusting environment in which students feel confident in asking questions and sharing their feelings.

Possible check-in questions: (teenmentalhealth.org)

- What have you been doing this past week?
- What has been enjoyable? What has been difficult?
- Is there anything you or your family need(s)?
- Do you have concerns that you would like to share?

More Specific Strategies by Theme:

<p>To foster a sense of physical and emotional safety, educators can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set and keep a predictable routine• Promote self-awareness through feeling charts• Use mindfulness and breathing exercises to support self-awareness and regulation• Encourage students to ask questions and self-advocate• Firm but fair boundaries - clear, consistent expectations• Increased physical literacy and movement opportunities• Be culturally responsive, fostering cultural pride and self-pride by weaving cultural knowledge into teaching and learning	<p>To foster a sense of belonging, educators can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase focus on student voice and agency• Make time to ask about students' extracurricular interests• Greet students by name and create safe and upbeat connections – like air high fives• Help the students feel connected by encouraging circle time, show and tell, or storytelling• Embed a sense of responsibility by assigning class management roles• Personal 1-on-1 time to connect - getting to re-know the “student story”• Humor, personality, class events
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<p>To foster a sense of hope, educators can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage students to get fresh air and move when possible• Explore individual students' talents and strengths• Give positive affirmation to all students• Encourage students to discuss things that bring them joy• Foster engagement in school and cultural communities• Make time for acknowledging gratitude and celebrating success	<p>To foster a sense of mastery, educators can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage student ownership of their learning and physical literacy journey• Give students the chance to share what they have learned or to teach their classmates• Highlight each student's contribution to the learning• Academic differentiation• Support social emotional learning• High quality meaningful learning experiences
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Be there for each other. Supporting each other as colleague will make us that much better when we have to offer this support for our students!

Student Monitoring

If you see these signs in a student and things do not appear to be improving, ensure that you reach out to the mental health practitioner (counsellor, school-based social worker) or principal.

1. Inability to focus
2. Inability to attend to tasks
3. An observed change in their personality
4. They speak about sleeping way more, sleeping way less, they have greater impatience
5. Irritability
6. Hypervigilance
7. Fearfulness
8. Easily startled
9. Avoidance or withdrawal
10. Intrusive or bothersome thoughts
11. Worries/anxiety/fear
12. Behavior dysregulation
13. Substance or alcohol use

Considerations as student return to class:

- It's important for you to be aware of how you are doing? If you are feeling anxious, scared or worried – your students will feel anxious, scared or worried. We need to ensure that our learning environments are safe, welcoming and caring.
- Think about developing a student survey. ([Upon return](#) and possibly [weekly after that](#))
- What does your daily check in look like?
- What does social emotion learning look like in your classroom?
- How are you teaching social distancing, teaching personal hygiene and mask usage...kindly?
- What are the new rules and expectations in your classes? In your school?

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER: Implementing our Continuum of Supports and Services Model

The Parkland School Division's Continuum of Supports and Services Model is based on the following principles:

- Supports and services are as close to the classroom as possible, providing at elbow support for teachers
- Influencing and supporting successful planning and delivery of programming that is responsive in identifying and meeting the needs of all of our students
- Creating the infrastructure within our division that supports ease of access to a continuum of supports and services
- Ensuring that all staff fully understands the pathways to access supports and services
- Developing processes that simplify accessing supports and services
- Fostering the ability for teachers to access the supports they need (for themselves or their students) when they need them, for the duration that they need them and for the intensity that they need them

Great Universal work that our staff is already doing:

- Every teacher has a Toolkit
- Health curriculum/lessons
- Wellness, GO TO Educator and MH resources
- Champions
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Lean on other school and district supports.

- Communicate with parents. Share your observations.
- Consult with and refer to school-based team members and Student Services.
- Consult with Principal
- Consult with teacher resources and community supports and services contacts (Appendix 1)

Appendix 1- Teacher Resources and Community Contact Information

Check out these links if you would like to incorporate wellness activities into your class and curriculum.

<https://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Tipsheet7-1024x1024.png>

<https://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/tipsheet2-833x1024.jpg>

<https://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Tipsheet3-1024x1024.png>

<https://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Screen-Shot-2020-04-16-at-10.30.33-AM-1024x1024.png>

https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/how-to-help-families-and-staff-build-resilience-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=june_2020

Talking Tips:

<https://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Screen-Shot-2020-04-16-at-10.30.10-AM-1024x1024.png>

Free Resources:

<http://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Useful-Resources-During-COVID-19.pdf>

A. Community Supports Contact Information

Community Compass <https://parklandcc.ca/help/>

Canadian Mental Health Association www.cmha.ab.ca 780- 482-HELP (available 24/7)	• Distress Center www.distresscentre.com main crisis: 403-266-4357
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<p>Live Chat</p> <p>https://edmonton.cmha.ca/online-crisis-chat</p> <p>Available M-F (6pm – 10 pm & Sat to Sun 12pm-4pm)</p>	<p>Crisis Response Team</p> <p>780-342-7777 (Available 24/7)</p>
<p>Hope for Wellness</p> <p>780-482-4357 (HELP) available 24/7</p>	<p>Children’s Mental Health Crisis Response Team:</p> <p>780-427-4491</p> <p>Everyday 8:30am – 10:45pm</p>

Students can contact any of the community resources on this list and to seek help. We want students to know that there is always support available to them and that they are not alone.

References

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Lee, Joyce (2020, April 14). *Mental Health Effects of School Closures During COVID-19*. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(20\)30109-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(20)30109-7/fulltext)

[Teenmentalhealth.org](https://teenmentalhealth.org)