

# Parkland School Division

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## Guidance for School Re-Entry – Principals' Handbook

Updated February 28, 2022



**PARKLAND**  
SCHOOL DIVISION

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# Overview

This document is designed to accommodate the return to school for staff and students when they return to in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year.

These following measures have been developed for use by Parkland School Division and are based on the guidance documents developed by the Government of Alberta. The intent of this document is to guide schools and departments in preparation for the return of students. Each school will develop site-specific plans that address the measures indicated in this document.

As this guidance document is based on direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Government of Alberta, they are subject to change based on new or updated recommendations or requirements.

## General Building Safety

### Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Ensure students are taught and reminded about proper hand washing techniques.
- Ensure students are taught and reminded about the importance of physical distancing, coughing and sneezing techniques.
- **As of February 9, 2022 - Mandatory masking requirements were removed for children under 13 in all settings and for students of any age attending K-12 schools and participating in school activities.**
- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering.
- Plan for times for students to wash hands following activities that have students touch shared surfaces/items (keyboards, basketballs, etc.).
- All schools will have a mobile hand sanitizing station at the public entrance(s) of all schools.
  - All guests and/or visitors are encouraged to use the hand sanitizing station when entering the school.
- All sinks in schools will have soap and paper towels, and/or hand dryers available to assist with hand washing.
- Students are to be encouraged to bring a water bottle instead of using water fountains.

## Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Enhanced cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will continue. School principals will meet with the head custodian to determine cleaning schedule, identification of high touch areas, 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 to students to wipe the surface with paper towel).
- Student work areas should be cleaned between users.
- Schools are to increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening doors or windows where practical.

## Ventilation

- Proper ventilation and airflow is one of many ways we are maintaining safe learning spaces for staff and students. All of our Division schools meet or exceed recommendations from the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) in relation to COVID-19

We will continue to adapt to any changes to the ASHRAE guidelines throughout the year. In our schools, this means:

- using the highest grade filters possible;
- more frequent filter changes scheduled throughout the year;
- maximizing airflow and fresh air intake;
- extending running time for mechanical systems by four hours during school days;
- mechanical systems are inspected on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Our schools have mechanical systems that allow for fresh air intake; and
- when weather allows, we encourage classes to open classroom windows and use the many outdoor learning spaces located on and around our school grounds.
- Upgrading all filters to the MERV 13 standard.
- Investigate stand alone HEPA filtration systems in school environments where air flow and/or quality is determined to be inadequate. Use of HEPA filters must only be done when determined to be required by qualified personnel.

## Screening

- All parents, students and staff are to be provided with the link (or copy) of the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#) at the start of the school year and/or at registration.
- Links to the self-assessment tool should be sent home or shared (newsletters, school websites, etc.) throughout the school year as appropriate.
- Before arriving at school, all students, school and division staff should self-screen for symptoms using the supplied checklist. 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.
- If a child/staff member develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies), the child/staff member should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to school. [See more on Alberta's rapid testing at home.](#)
- Schools must keep records of children's known pre-existing conditions.
- Signs must be posted reminding persons not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.
- If a student or staff member has any of the following core COVID-19 symptoms (new, or worsening and not related to other known causes), they are required to isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms, or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test result, as per provincial guidelines:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Loss of sense of smell or taste
  - Sore throat (adults only)
  - Runny nose (adults only)
- Anyone who reports symptoms should be directed to stay home, seek health care advice as appropriate (e.g., call Health Link 811, or their primary health care practitioner, or 911 for emergency response), and fill out the [AHS Online Self-Assessment tool](#) to determine if they should access a PCR test. If a PCR test is not recommended they may conduct an at-home rapid test. For more information refer to the rapid testing at home website.
- Anyone with symptoms should isolate immediately, following AH isolation guidance and orders, and can determine if COVID -19 testing is necessary by accessing the AHS Online Self-Assessment Tool. COVID-19 testing by AHS is currently limited to individuals in high-risk settings or for those who are at high risk of severe outcomes.

- Rapid testing kits are available, and can be used on individuals to test for COVID-19. Refer to rapid testing at home for more information.
- Fully vaccinated students/staff experiencing fever, cough, shortness of breath or loss of sense of taste/smell must continue to isolate for 5 days from when their symptoms started or until they resolve, whichever is longer. For more information on isolation please visit [alberta.ca/isolation](https://alberta.ca/isolation).
- For up to five days following their isolation, all fully vaccinated individuals must wear masks whenever they are in a public place and/or in the company of another person (no exceptions permitted).
- Students/staff who are not fully vaccinated experiencing fever, cough, shortness of breath or loss of sense of taste/smell must continue to isolate for 10 days from when their symptoms started or until they resolve, whichever is longer. If they receive a negative test result, they must continue to isolate until their symptoms resolve. For more information on isolation please visit [alberta.ca/isolation](https://alberta.ca/isolation).
- Please see Appendix B for management of adults and children who are symptomatic and/or tested for COVID-19.
- Proof of a negative COVID-19 test result is not necessary for a student, teacher or staff member to return to school.
- It is strongly recommended that household contacts who are NOT fully vaccinated, of COVID-19 cases, stay home for 14 days from the date of last household exposure.
  - In addition, they should monitor for symptoms for 14 days from the last day of household exposure, and if they develop any symptoms, should isolate and complete the AHS Self-Assessment tool to determine if they need to be tested for COVID-19.

## Responding to Illness

- Staff members, parents, and students must not enter the school if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Schools must clearly communicate expectations to parents and community.
- Schools must develop procedures to address staff that become symptomatic during the school day to allow that staff member to isolate/leave the school for the time period recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Health Services.
- If a student develops symptoms while at the school facility, the student should be asked to wear a non-medical mask if they are able to, and be isolated in a separate room. The parent/guardian should be notified to come and pick up the student immediately. If a separate room is not available, the student must be kept at least 2 metres away from other students.
  - The room used to isolate must be appropriately cleaned and disinfected following use.
- 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.

## COVID-19 Notifications

- The province has indicated that schools will not be informed about individual cases of COVID-19.
- Staff and students may choose to notify a school about a positive COVID-19 test, but it is not required. If PSD receives notification about a positive case from Alberta Health Services and are directed to do so, it will be communicated with our school community.
- Quarantine is not required for close contacts under current provincial direction. This means classes will not be required to quarantine if there is a case of COVID-19 at school.
- Individuals who test positive will be expected to isolate based on the provincial requirements in place at that time.
- If there is an outbreak of any respiratory illness, including COVID-19, at a school, the Division and our schools will work with Alberta Health Services to share information with our school community.
- Schools will continue to report an absence rate of 10% or higher to Alberta Health Services. This helps health officials monitor for a variety of illnesses—such as clusters of respiratory and gastrointestinal illness—and alerts Alberta Health Services to possible outbreaks.

## Cohorts

- As of March 1, 2022, any remaining school requirements for COVID-19 measures are removed including Kindergarten to Grade 6 cohorting. Schools may choose to implement cohorting strategies when practical.

## Physical Distancing

- Schools are encouraged to promote the practice of physical distancing when possible.

## In-person Learning

- Teachers/schools should plan for students, who are attending In-Person Learning, to miss periods of time due to requirements for self-isolation, delays in COVID-19 test results, etc.

## Expectations for visitors and other service providers entering the school

- Non-essential visitors will gradually be welcomed back into Parkland School Division schools.
- Parents/guardians can attend the school if they are required as part of the educational programming needs of the school.

## Expectations for shared use equipment

- The practice of appropriate cleaning of shared equipment will continue as required.

## Masks

- **As of February 9, 2022** - Mandatory masking requirements were removed for children under 13 in all settings and for students of any age attending K-12 schools and participating in school activities.
- Medical masks can also be worn by staff and students to provide additional protection. Staff and students will be supported regardless of any personal choices they make with respect to masking.



## Food Service

### Cafeterias

- School cafeterias are permitted provided they implement industry wide protocols to operate safely.
- Any food preparation should be done in compliance with industry specific guidelines.

## Off-Campus/Work Experience, Other Learning Experiences, Extracurricular, Field Trips

### Off-campus/Field Trips

- Work experience may resume.
- If the work experience placement is in a workplace, the student is expected to follow health rules set out by the workplace.
- Off-site activities may resume with no restrictions in place. (e.g., field trips for group physical activity, performance activities and recreational activities that are part of the curriculum). Sector specific restrictions relevant to the location of the field trip should be taken into consideration.

### Music and Performance Activities

- Music and performance activities may proceed.

### Extra-Curricular Sports

- Sports practices and games and outdoor activities may proceed and spectators are permitted.
- All extracurricular sports activities must follow the current CMOH orders for youth physical activity.

## Vaccination

Parkland School Division's [Vaccination Protocol](#) will be suspended until further notice. This protocol may be re-implemented at the discretion of the office of the Superintendent, as the Chief Medical Officer of Health issues recommendations and the province continues to monitor COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU cases.