

Parkland School Division

Guidance for School Re-Entry – Principals' Handbook

Updated September 16, 2021



PARKLAND
SCHOOL DIVISION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	3
General Building Safety	3
Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices	3
Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting	4
Ventilation	4
Screening.....	5
Responding to Illness.....	6
COVID-19 Notifications	6
Cohorts.....	7
Physical Distancing	7
In-person Learning.....	7
Expectations for drop-off/pick-up and entry areas at schools	8
Expectations for visitors and other service providers entering the school	8
Expectations for shared use equipment.....	8
Masks.....	9
Food Service	9
Cafeterias.....	9
Breakfast/Snack/Hot lunch Programs	9
Off-Campus/Work Experience, Other Learning Experiences, Extracurricular, Field Trips	10
Vaccination	10

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.
- **Mandatory** use of face masks for Grades 4-12 where appropriate and instruct and remind students on the proper use, especially in situations where physical distancing is difficult to maintain or in situations where close contact is for more than 15 minutes.
- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering.
- Encourage parents to send hand sanitizer for students' individual use.
- Plan for times for students to wash hands following activities that have students touch shared surfaces/items (keyboards, basketballs, etc.).
- All classrooms will be provided with a bottle of liquid hand sanitizer and/or dispenser to be used by all students at the beginning and end of all classes.
- All schools will have a mobile hand sanitizing station at the public entrance(s) of all schools.
 - All guests and/or visitors will be required 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.

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.
- 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)

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

Where practical:

- Plan to have students work in a limited number of cohorts.
- Schedule staggered breaks, lunch time, transition between classes, recess, etc. are encouraged where practical.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Where practical:

- Limit access to the school of any non-essential visitors or volunteers including parents. Maintain records of contacts within the school by any visitors to the school.
- It is **recommended** to space seating/desks 2 meters (6 feet) apart if possible.
- All teachers are to keep seating plans within classrooms.
- It is still recommended to maintain physical distancing within a cohort whenever practical to minimize the risk for virus transmission (i.e. spacing between desks).
- Strongly recommend the use of masks for students or staff when physical distancing is not possible (where appropriate) or in situations where close contact is for more than 15 minutes.
- Where practical, stagger the dismissal of classes within the school day to provide for physical distancing in hallways.
- Where practical, stagger break times/lunch breaks to decrease numbers of students in hallways, common areas or in playgrounds.
- Provide adequate supervision in busy areas of schools/grounds to encourage appropriate physical distancing.
- Consider how to best address traffic flow throughout the schools to reduce congestion.
- Consider marking appropriate areas with directional arrows, 2 metre physical distancing areas where lineups occur (For example: parent waiting areas, front offices, playground equipment), within classrooms for younger students or other applicable areas.
- Use the largest room available for meetings, instruction, etc. to maximize distance between participants.
- Utilize 'virtual' meetings with staff, agencies, parents etc.

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 DROP-OFF/PICK-UP AND ENTRY AREAS AT SCHOOLS

- Where practical, plan for the use of multiple entrances to the school during morning start-up and afternoon dismissal to limit the number of students in close proximity in entrances, hallways etc.
- Communicate to parents the expectations/procedures for student drop-off.

EXPECTATIONS FOR VISITORS AND OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS ENTERING THE SCHOOL

- There should be no non-essential visitors allowed into the school.
- Parents/guardians can attend the school if they are required as part of the educational programming needs of the school.
- A record of all visitors must be kept.

EXPECTATIONS FOR SHARED USE EQUIPMENT

- Use of shared items or equipment is to be avoided where practical.
- Equipment that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Students should be provided with an area for storing personal items.
- Plan for times/procedures for students to wash hands following activities that have students touch shared surfaces/items (keyboards, basketballs, etc.).
- Require parents to send individual supplies, equipment wherever possible.

MASKS

- **Mandatory Mask Use: Staff, Students (Grade 4 through grade 12), and All Visitors** in accordance with the [2021 PSD Mask Protocol](#).
- K-3 students are encouraged to wear masks if they chose to do so and are able to properly use a mask.
- All students, staff and visitors must have access to a mask at all times for situations that require a mask.
- Masks are not required outside when appropriate distancing can be maintained.
- The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, may determine programming, activities or situations that allow students to remove their masks for the duration of the activity, when:
 - Additional safety measures are in place or use, or
 - The nature of the activity makes mask impractical.
- Masks are not required during strenuous physical activities (such as during physical education classes or during sporting activities).
- **Masks are required for all students (regardless of age or grade) and staff while on a school bus.**
 - If masks present a safety risk to the bus driver, the driver may remove their mask.

FOOD SERVICE

CAFETERIAS

- School cafeterias are permitted provided they implement industry wide protocols to operate safely.

BREAKFAST/SNACK/HOT LUNCH PROGRAMS

- Any 'grab-and-go' or snack food items should be pre-packaged and distributed in a manner that limits touching.
 - For instance, items could be laid out by type/flavour to prevent multiple students searching through looking for a favourite flavour of granola bar.
- Any food preparation should be done in compliance with industry specific guidelines.

OFF-CAMPUS/WORK EXPERIENCE, OTHER LEARNING EXPERIENCES, EXTRACURRICULAR, FIELD TRIPS

- Work experience may resume as long as the risk of infection is mitigated for all participants.
- If the work experience placement is in a workplace, the student is expected to follow health rules set out by the workplace.
- Use of shared items or equipment should be minimized. Equipment that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use, and users must perform hand hygiene before and after each use.
- Learning experiences involving unprotected in-person singing, music, or creative performances may pose an increased risk of transmission. These activities are permitted to proceed with appropriate risk mitigation strategies.
- Sports practices and outdoor activities may proceed with appropriate risk mitigation strategies (i.e. no shaking hands at the end of the game)

VACCINATION

- All staff and students born in 2009 or earlier (turning 12+) can get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Immunizations will be available through temporary clinics in schools for students in Grades 7 to 12 as well as teachers and staff, starting on September 7. The clinics are operated by Alberta Health Services.
- Students, teachers and staff can receive whichever dose they are eligible for in school at this time. However, if they receive their first dose at the in-school clinic, they will need to book their second dose at a local pharmacy or Alberta Health Services (AHS) clinic when it is time to do so.
- Students under 18 **WILL NOT be vaccinated in schools WITHOUT parent or guardian consent.**