

Dear families,

We are looking forward to welcoming your child for another year of learning. As you know, students will begin to return to classrooms on September 10 and 11 for a full orientation on the implemented health and safety protocols and for an introduction to their cohort.

As we prepare for a return to school, I am writing to provide you with our school district's ministry-approved [Restart Plan](#). This plan includes information about the health and safety measures implemented in our schools and district facilities, the organization of learning groups in our elementary and secondary schools, as well as the steps we have taken to ensure continuity of learning should we need to transition between stages. Your child's school will provide you with more school-specific details.

Full-time return to school in learning groups, Monday to Friday

As you will see from the plan, elementary students will attend school daily in learning groups that will consist of up to a maximum of 60 students and staff. School principals will inform parents about the organization of the learning groups at their school. Most learning groups will be 30 or less. The school day will run from 8:30 am to 2:20 pm as usual, with principals implementing controlled start-up and dismissal procedures.

While recess and lunch breaks will remain the same for all groups, our larger-sized schools (i.e. schools with 350 or more students) may schedule separate recess and lunch breaks. You will receive these details from your child's school principal.

Students with diverse abilities/disabilities

Students with diverse abilities/disabilities will be provided full-time in-class instruction unless alternate programming is otherwise determined in consultation with parents through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. For students who require a partial or blended program, a plan will be established within the student's IEP. The school team will ensure that the student has access to technology and other items as required for instructional programming and therapy. For additional information, please speak with your school principal.

Screening and when to stay home

Parents/guardians will be required to do a daily health assessment of their child(ren) every morning using a [district-provided checklist](#) before sending their child(ren) to school. Students who have any symptoms of illness must not attend school. District staff will need to perform this same daily assessment and will also be required to stay home should they have any symptoms of illness.

Practicing hand hygiene

Alcohol-based hand sanitizing stations have been installed throughout our schools and at the entrances of all district facilities, and hand hygiene signage has been placed throughout all district buildings. We have installed touchless faucets where possible and provided paper towels in all bathrooms.

Keeping a safe distance from others

Elementary students in a learning group do not need to stay two metres apart but should limit personal contact. Classrooms will be configured to allow for distance between students and adults as needed. Additionally, at recess and lunchtime, students outside of their learning group will be encouraged to use different areas of the school to allow for physical distancing. Larger schools may implement staggered

lunch and recess breaks. Finally, students will have a designated entrance/exit with staff providing appropriate supervision at start-up, breaks, and dismissal.

Wearing a mask and/or face covering

Although masks are not required for elementary school students, the school district will provide two reusable cloth masks to all elementary students who want one. Staff who interact with multiple learning groups will be required to wear a mask and face shield when they are unable to maintain physical distancing.

Ventilation and enhanced cleaning and disinfection routines

Ventilation systems in all school district facilities will meet WorkSafeBC requirements, and all air filters will be replaced on a regular basis. All schools will be cleaned in accordance with the [*Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings*](#). General cleaning (including single-use surfaces like student desks) will occur once every 24 hours, while frequently touched surfaces as well as all shared equipment, appliances, manipulatives, and tools, will be cleaned and disinfected twice every 24 hours. The school district has hired additional custodians to meet the demands of these enhanced cleaning routines.

Alternate options

As I mentioned in my August 19 letter, the school district does have existing options for blended instruction for those families who may require this accommodation. At the elementary level, the K-9 Odyssey program offers this kind of flexibility, as it uses a blended approach in which students attend school in small groups for instruction a few hours per week and the teacher guides their home learning instruction through in-person and online support. Please speak to your child's school principal first regarding the possibility of school-based accommodations for your child/family.

For additional information on our school district's *Restart Plan*, including information about the district's preparedness for transitioning between stages and new bus routines, visit the district website at <https://www.sd42.ca/sd42-restart-plan/>.