



**COVID-19
FMPSD Division Practices
2020-2021**

May 30, 2021

Fort McMurray Public School Division

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Message from the Board Chair

Dear Parents, Families, and Guardians,

The Board of Trustees is very grateful for all the planning and work that has been done over the summer by so many of our staff throughout the Division. We have been apprised of plans along the way and have had an ongoing opportunity to ask questions and share comments. After a comprehensive review of the re-entry plan at a meeting held last week, the Board is confident that FMPSD is doing its best to ensure the safety and health of our students, staff and families under the mandate given to us by the government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Mywaart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Linda Mywaart
Board Chair
Fort McMurray Public Schools

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Parents, Families, Guardians and Staff,

On July 21, 2020 the Government of Alberta announced that students would return to in-person classes in September at near-normal operation with additional health measures in place. What this new learning environment will look like has been on the minds of many as summer comes to a close. As we prepare to bring 6500 students back into our 16 schools, our Board of Trustees and staff have been working very hard on our re-entry plan. This plan is first and foremost based on our Division motto, 'Doing What's Best for Kids.' We believe that this requires us to focus our plan around:

- student, staff, and family safety
- high quality teaching and the continuity of learning
- family choice

In an effort to keep our students and staff as safe as possible, we have made a number of changes to our school buildings, school routines, and our practices. These changes are outlined in this document. We recognize that as the provincial and national response to COVID-19 changes, we will also need to adjust our plans.

Student, staff, and family safety

The changes we are making are based on provincial health requirements and recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These changes include:

- requiring students and staff to conduct daily health checks prior to coming to school
- strict stay-at-home protocols for those feeling unwell
- enhancing custodial services, cleaning and disinfecting in schools
- encouraging physical distancing as much as possible
- mandating masks for students from Grades 4-12 and for all staff where physical distancing cannot be maintained
- recommending that students in ECDP - Grade 3 consider wearing masks where possible

High quality teaching and the continuity of learning

Fort McMurray Public Schools is a learning community dedicated to education for all students for personal excellence. We have made a substantial investment in video conference platforms, technology, staff development and training to support high quality instruction which can occur both in the classroom or online. This will ensure the shift between in-person and online learning over the 2020-2021 school year, we can do so without disrupting the continuity of learning. This is also intended to support students in their learning in the event they need to miss school due to illness or if required to self-isolate. Our goal is to minimize the disruption to learning that may occur as a result of the COVID-19 virus and required health responses.

Family choice

We know that the emergency-based distance learning that occurred in the spring was a challenge to students, families and teachers. Additionally, we recognize that returning to in-class learning may not

be the best option for all students; parents and families know their personal circumstances the best. We honour and respect the family choice to best meet the needs of their children. As a result, we have developed the online education program, E-cademy+. This program is intended to deliver the full spectrum of curriculum to our students. Our goal is to ensure that all of our students receive a high quality education, no matter what option best meets their educational and health needs.

Fort McMurray Public Schools values its partnerships with parents, guardians, and families. This year will be no different and it is now more important than ever that our families and schools work together to support our students in modeling healthy practices. The risks associated with the COVID-19 virus cannot be eliminated completely, but by working together to support students and by following the advice of the medical experts, we can minimize those risks together.

We are excited to see our students return to our classrooms. Although near-normal conditions will look and feel different than past years, we will work together to ensure the success of our students. I am very proud of the work our staff does and I look forward to seeing our students flourish.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Turner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Jennifer Turner, R. Psych
Superintendent of Schools
Fort McMurray Public Schools

Safety and well-being

The safety and well-being of staff, students and families is the foundation of our return to school. Protecting each other is the shared responsibility among all members of the school community - we all have a critical role to play in following the safety protocols set out by Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health. These protocols are intended to mitigate or reduce the risk of COVID-19, but do not eliminate all risk. The provincial re-entry plan's focus on safety does not depend on one single strategy, but many strategies that work together to support the safest environment possible within the complex dynamics of a school community.

These strategies include:

- cohorts
- screening for illness
- staying home when sick
- showing signs of illness while at school
- students with pre-existing conditions
- if there is a case of COVID-19 at school
- handwashing and sanitizing
- cleaning standards
- physical distancing
- personal protective equipment (PPE) and masks

Cohorts

A cohort is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together (i.e., a teacher and an educational assistant who work with the same class are in a cohort with the students). Cohorting decreases the number of close contacts staff and students have in the school. Limiting people to a cohort assists in reducing the risk of transmitting COVID-19 and aids in contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school community.

Screening for illness

Before coming to school each day, all staff and students must complete the most updated Government of Alberta's COVID-19 [Screening Questionnaire](#) to determine whether they can attend school or must stay home. The questionnaire is available in several languages on the website [Screening Questionnaire, multi-languages](#).

If the answer is "Yes" to any of the questions, staff and students must stay home and use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether a COVID-19 test is required.

Screening questionnaire forms do not need to be submitted to the school. The questionnaire is a tool to assess wellness prior to coming to school.

Stay home when sick

All students, staff and visitors who meet the following criteria must stay home as per [Alberta Health Services \(AHS\) guidelines](#).

Adults over 18 are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if:

- they tested positive for COVID-19
- they have any core symptoms and have not been tested, and are not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. Core symptoms include:
 - fever
 - cough
 - shortness of breath
 - sore throat
 - runny nose
- quarantine for 14 days if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 or if they travelled outside Canada

Children are required to isolate for at least 10 days or until symptoms are gone, whichever is longer, or until they test negative for COVID-19, if they have any of the following [core symptoms](#):

- cough
- fever
- loss of taste or smell
- shortness of breath

Children under 18 stay home and monitor for 24 hours if they have one of the following symptoms:

- chills
- sore throat or painful swallowing
- runny nose or congestion
- feeling unwell or fatigue
- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- unexplained loss of appetite
- muscle or joint aches
- headache
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)

If the symptom is improving after 24 hours, the child can return to school.

Should the symptom worsens after 24 hours, or if additional symptoms emerge, or if the child has any two symptoms from the core COVID-19 list, they are to continue to stay home, and testing is recommended.

People unsure if they should self-isolate should self-assess using the [COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#) and contact [Alberta Health Link at 8-1-1](#), or the public health unit to speak to a health professional.

For guided support in helping determine if children need to stay home, visit Alberta Health Services' [Guidance for Parents of Children Attending School and/or Childcare](#).

Isolation and quarantine requirements for vaccinated staff and students **UPDATED**

If you are fully-vaccinated and are exposed to a COVID-19 case:

- If you have no symptoms, you are not required to quarantine.
- If you do have symptoms, you must isolate for 10 days and should get tested so your isolation can end early if you test negative.

If you are partially vaccinated and are exposed to a COVID-19 case:

- If you have no symptoms, you must quarantine for 10 days and should get tested.
 - Your quarantine can end early if you test negative on day 7 or later.
 - If you test negative before day 7, you must remain in quarantine and need a second negative test on day 7 or later to end quarantine.
- If you do have symptoms, you must isolate and should get tested.
 - If you test negative before day 7, you must continue to quarantine (10 days total from exposure date).
 - If you test negative on day 7 or later and your symptoms have resolved, your quarantine can end.

**You are considered fully vaccinated 14 days after receiving both doses in a 2-dose vaccine series, or 1 dose in a 1 dose vaccine series.*

You are considered partially vaccinated 14 days after receiving the first dose in a 2-dose vaccine series.

Illness at school

Anyone presenting core symptoms will need to leave the school. In addition:

- students who develop core symptoms at school will be asked to wear a non-medical mask and be isolated in a separate room or kept at least 2 metres away from others
- parents will be contacted to pick up their child immediately. All students must have an emergency contact on file for student pickup in the case that the parent/guardian is unable to do so
- once the student has been picked up, the infirmary will be sealed off until custodians can complete a thorough cleaning and sanitizing
- any items the symptomatic person was in contact with will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected

Students and staff with pre-existing conditions

People who have health issues (i.e., allergies or chronic cough unrelated to COVID-19) and are exhibiting COVID-like symptoms should be tested once, according to the Alberta Health Services Guidance document; this will establish a baseline for people. If symptoms change or worsen, the person will need to leave the school, follow illness protocols, and have another COVID-19 test to determine if the symptoms are still related to the pre-existing medical condition. If the test is

negative, the person may return to school. Families can learn more about COVID-19 testing and [book a test online through Alberta Health Services](#).

If there is a case of COVID-19 at school

If health officials confirm a case of COVID-19 at a school, Alberta Health Services will take the following steps:

- quickly inform the school Division and the school
- communicate with the school community
- work with schools to identify students and staff members who have been in close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19
- provide follow-up direction
- only people in direct contact with a confirmed case need to isolate themselves for 14 days
- individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 in the 90 days before being exposed to another case of COVID-19 are not required to quarantine

If a school has 5 or more cases the provincial health authority will consider this an outbreak. A COVID-19 case will not automatically lead to school closure; it could be that only the group of students and staff who came in close contact will be required to stay home for 14 days.

Parents and staff will be notified if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed at school.

Schools will support students and staff to learn or work at home if they are required to self-isolate.

If there is a case of COVID-19 on the bus

If health officials confirm a case of COVID-19 on the bus, Alberta Health Services will take the following steps

- quickly inform the school Division and the school
- communicate with the school community
- AHS will work with schools to identify students who have been in close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19
- provide follow-up direction
- only people within three rows of a confirmed case on the bus are considered close contact
- confirmed cases are required to isolate themselves for 14 days
- individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 in the 90 days before being exposed to another case of COVID-19 are not required to quarantine

If you are a close contact to COVID-19

As of April 2021, AHS recommends that all Albertans, including students and staff in schools, who are close contacts be tested twice and provides the following information:

- the first test should be booked as soon as possible after receiving notification of the exposure

- anyone who develops symptoms should be tested as soon as possible. You can book an online appointment by using the Alberta Health Services [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) or by calling Health Link at 811
- it is important to note that even if you are negative for the virus, you are still required to stay home for a minimum of 14 days

Handwashing and sanitizing

Everyone who enters a school will be required to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately. Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day.

Schools will provide hand sanitizer throughout the building to support these requirements. Schools will also promote proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette with verbal reminders and posters throughout the school.

Cleaning standards

Fort McMurray Public Schools has a COVID-19 cleaning protocol for all Division schools that aligns with provincial directives regarding cleaning and disinfecting. These increased measures include:

- using provincially recommended COVID-19 cleaning supplies
- additional training for custodial staff
- additional custodial time in schools to support enhanced cleaning protocols
- removing items made of fabric, soft furnishings and area rugs from classrooms and common areas that cannot be cleaned to provincial standards
- frequently cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces such as door handles, door knobs, light switches, student desk tops, countertops and tables
- more frequent cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school with specific attention to washrooms, high-traffic areas and classrooms

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is one component of the provincial COVID-19 recommendations that encourages people to maintain a distance of two meters between them. Increasing the space between people decreases the risk of transmission. Physical distancing for children can be challenging in an ECDP-12 educational setting, particularly with younger children. It is important to assist children in understanding the importance of minimizing physical contact with one another. Schools have controls in place to promote physical distancing throughout their buildings including in classrooms, hallways, washrooms and common areas.

These controls may include:

- removing excess furniture in classrooms to make more space to spread student desks and tables farther apart
- seating students at desks or tables that do not directly face each other
- plexiglass shields in classrooms where physical distancing is challenging
- removing and rearranging seating in common areas to prevent students from gathering
- posting signs and using floor markers to control the flow of foot traffic and support physical distancing

- plexiglass shields in school offices
- reinforcing the importance of keeping hands to self and respecting personal space
- staggering the times for class transitions and breaks to prevent crowded hallways
- taking advantage of outdoor learning spaces
- avoiding large gatherings of people, such as school assemblies

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and masks

Not all forms of PPE are required for all staff, but additional PPE is important in the following situations:

- PPE will be part of plans to support students with special needs who require complex medical supports
- custodial staff will receive appropriate PPE to support their work cleaning and disinfecting
- all Division staff will be provided with reusable masks and offered a face shield as part of the Division's strategy to support a safer return to school; masks are still required for staff who are wearing face shields
- please follow Alberta's [guidance for wearing of non-medical face masks for the general public](#) and the provincial health guidelines for [how to choose and wear a mask](#)

Mask wearing is mandatory for staff in all settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Students in Grades 4-12 will be required to wear masks in all shared and common areas such as hallways and on buses. Exemptions will be made for students and staff who are unable to wear a mask due to medical or other needs.

Alberta Health Services recommends the use of a face shield in addition to a mask if the worker is likely to be exposed to splashes, large droplets or saliva in the course of workplace duties.

What school will look like

Arriving at school

All students will have an assigned door to use every time they enter and exit their school. When students arrive at school they will:

- follow physical distancing guidelines to stay at least 2 metres apart while they wait to enter the school
- follow physical distancing guidelines to line up
- wait for school staff to bring them inside

COVID-19 signage on entrances

All school doors will have COVID-19 signs posted to indicate that anyone with symptoms cannot enter the school. Signs will also outline current health service expectations regarding mask use.

Hand sanitizer and handwashing

Students and staff will be required to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately upon entering the school.

Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day, including:

- every time they enter or exit the school
- before they enter classrooms
- before and after they use shared equipment
- before and after eating

Schools will provide hand sanitizer throughout the building to support these requirements.

Traffic flow within the school

Schools will use a variety of visual cues (posters, decals, tape) to help students maintain physical distancing within the school.

Lockers

Hallway and gym lockers can be made available at the discretion of the principal and in consideration of a number of site-specific factors including:

- the ability to meet social distancing requirements
- the availability of resources to ensure cleaning protocols are met

Measures must be in place to minimize crowding at lockers and locker assignments should be based on cohorting.

Consider having students bring only what they need for the day and keep school supplies and textbooks in their backpacks in order to minimize locker visits.

Elementary students may have access to hooks or cubbies where social distancing protocols can be maintained.

Assigned seating in classrooms

Students will follow an assigned seating plan throughout the day in the classroom, including for eating lunch. Assigned seating is a strategy to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 throughout a cohort of students. It will also support health contact tracing should that be required.

Washroom protocols

Washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout the day.

Water fountains

Every school has two water bottle filling stations. We ask that students and staff bring a refillable water bottle to use at the filling station.

Common areas

Schools will have measures in place to promote physical distancing in spaces where students often gather, such as foyers, learning commons, or intersections in hallways. Measures will include:

- limiting the number of students allowed in certain areas at certain times
- requiring students to walk straight through some areas, so they don't crowd together in groups
- having staff supervise high-traffic areas and remind students to adhere to physical distancing protocols

High-traffic areas will feature floor decals to remind students and staff of physical distancing requirements. There will also be a maximum number of people allowed in the school office at one time.

Dismissal times

Schools will take measures to prevent crowding in hallways and to support physical distancing where possible. **Adults who come to pick up students from the school will be asked to stay in their vehicle or outside the school, and to maintain a safe physical distance between themselves and others.**

Recess and playground equipment

Schools will follow the Government of Alberta Guidelines for Playground. Before and after school, school staff will be assigned to supervise areas outside school entrances. This supervision will help support physical distancing.

Playground use will follow the province's Guidelines for Playgrounds to use the equipment as safely as possible.

Open or closed campus

Junior high and high schools will work with their school community to decide if students will be allowed to leave campus during lunch breaks. If students are permitted to leave the school building, they must:

- respect physical distancing and all other COVID-19 health protocols when off campus
- assess whether they have any symptoms of illness before they re-enter the school
- students with newly developed symptoms will need to make arrangements to leave the school

Lunch

As per provincial health regulations, all students must wash their hands before eating and eat only their food; students are not permitted to share food.

Elementary students will remain with their class to eat lunch. Multiple cohorts will not gather together to eat. Junior high and high school students who stay on campus will be assigned to an area of the school for lunch.

School cafeterias must follow the information found in the document COVID-19 Information: Relaunch Guidance for Food Catering.

A designated lunch drop-off location at each school will be arranged for parents who may need to deliver lunch. Food must be packaged and clearly labelled with their **child's name prior** to placing the lunch in the designated area. Schools are not able to provide pens or lunch bags.

Schools will not be able to support any food delivery being brought to school through a food delivery service (such as pizza or Skip the Dishes).

Food in schools

There are clear provincial guidelines around food in schools during COVID-19. As a result, treats cannot be sent from home for birthdays or other special days.

School nutrition programs

Nutrition programs are allowed with a designated staff member serving the food, using appropriate hand hygiene and physical distancing. Schools are allowed to serve fresh fruit such as bananas, oranges and apples. The fruit must be cleaned and served by one designated staff member in order to not require fruit be individually wrapped. However, should a second exchange be required i.e.: via a classroom basket or through another server, then all fruit would be required to be individually wrapped.

The 2020-2021 Division calendar

The approved 2020-2021 FMPSD school calendar will remain in effect for the entire school year, no matter which provincial re-entry scenario we are under.

Volunteers and visitors

People authorized to enter the school include Canada Post, and delivery and maintenance personnel who support the running of the school. These people will only enter the school if the [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire](#) indicates they are safe and if they have no symptoms. They must also sign the school's visitor log and leave a number for contact tracing.

People entering the school are required to wear a mask and use hand sanitizer. Currently, parent volunteers are not permitted in the school building. However, we are optimistic that we will find ways to work with parent volunteers later in the school year as things improve.

Fort McMurray Public Schools staff entering the school building

System wide restrictions have been in place since the return to school in September. With recent provincial health measures being lifted, FMPSD will also look to gradually ease restrictions as outlined below:

Staff access to building - No COVID within 30 days in the school

- schools will remain open to all school Division employees Monday - Friday between 5:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- custodial staff will continue to clean and sanitize each room, sealing each door after 8:30 p.m. daily
- in the event a school has 30 days without a confirmed case of COVID:
 - individual school staff will be permitted access to their own school building on Saturdays
 - access under these conditions is permitted at any time of the day Saturday
 - the building will remain closed to all staff on Sundays

Staff access to building - Confirmed case of COVID

- in the event a school has a confirmed case of COVID:
 - there will be no staff access to the building on Saturday
 - custodial staff will provide enhanced cleaning and sanitizing measures as outlined in our COVID Custodial Practices Guide
 - the school must remain free of COVID for 30 days prior to resuming access on Saturdays

Staff access to building - Review process

- access to the building will be carefully monitored for one month
- at the end of March Division staff will review the impact of this change and make recommendations based on circumstances at that time

All Division staff are permitted to enter school buildings as required. This includes teachers on call, teaching and learning support staff, Division office staff, and Trustees. These staff will only enter the school if the [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire](#) indicates that they are safe to do and if they have no symptoms. They must also sign the school's visitor log. As we have Division contact information on file, they will not be required to leave a phone number or sign-in.

Family and school communication

Families can stay in contact with their schools through email and over the phone. Families who need to go into the school must book an appointment in advance. Family members with a scheduled appointment will need to use the Government of Alberta [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire](#) before going to the school to determine if it is safe for them to attend.

Families who are contacted to pick up a sick child can attend immediately. The person picking up the student must be safe to enter the school based on the COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire.

Family members entering the school will be required to wear a mask.

Student teachers

The Division will continue to support the placement of student teachers. They will be expected to follow all safety and health protocols in place for Division staff and students, including the daily COVID-19 screening. Student teachers will not be permitted to attend the school if they have symptoms.

Community use of schools

All NEW and SHORT-TERM community use of indoor school space is currently suspended. The Division will work with joint use partners on an ongoing basis to work towards safely reopening school space for community use.

Tenants

The Division provides rental space for tenants such as daycare services and after-school care programs as well as the YMCA and church groups that have long-term partnerships with the Division. Tenants occupying rental spaces have completed re-entry plans following Alberta Health Services guidelines. These plans include:

- restricted access to students
- separate entrances and washroom facilities for tenants
- dedicated tenant-only space
- additional cleaning and sanitizing

Transportation

To help keep students and staff as safe as possible:

- parents/guardians are responsible to ensure student(s) are ready and fit to attend school
- students/parents will be expected to complete the self-assessment daily and students to wash or sanitize their hands at home
- students in Grades 4-12 who are physically, psychologically, or developmentally able to wear a mask will be required to do so
- K-3 students are strongly encouraged to wear masks
- students will be assigned a regular seat; where there are 2 or 3 students to a seat the seating plan will first seat family members together, and then school cohorts and finally by bus cohort
- students will respect physical distancing when getting on and off the bus

School libraries UPDATED

As the Division continues to focus on best practice, school-based library staff will be trained in the use of UltraViolet C (UVC) sanitization devices to assist in the cleaning needs of instructional technology.

Non-electronic resources returned to the school library/learning commons will be held in isolation for 24 hours before being returned to circulation. More information regarding libraries can be found on the [Alberta Government's COVID-19 Guidance for Libraries document](#).

Emergency procedures

Schools will continue to implement emergency drills such as fire drills and lockdowns. Efforts will be made to maintain physical distancing during school evacuation.

Teaching and learning

In-person learning **UPDATED**

On April 25, 2021 the Government of Alberta announced [new targeted health measures](#) in the fight against COVID-19.

Effective Monday, April 26:

ECDP-6 students

- move to at-home learning - April 26, 2021 to May 28, 2021
- [resume in-person classes - May 31, 2021](#)

Grades 7-12 students

- move to at-home learning - April 26, 2021 to May 28, 2021
- [resume in-person classes - May 31, 2021](#)

Students with disabilities who require support and services and whose needs cannot be met through at-home learning, and students in outreach programs can continue to receive supports and services in-person at school, regardless of the shifts to at-home learning. Families and schools will work together to support students.

Family choice

Returning to in-class learning may not be the best option for all students; parents and families know their personal circumstances the best. We honour and respect family choice to best meet the needs of their children. Families can choose to send their child(ren) to physical school buildings as usual or enroll them in [E-cademy+](#). This online education program is intended to deliver the full K-12 Alberta curriculum, in a teacher-led, interactive online learning environment with differentiated instruction and assessment.

Families will be able to decide at the end of each reporting period, whether their child will attend school in person or choose to learn at home through online instruction. Please visit the [E-cademy+ website](#) to learn more.

COVID-19 specific protocol teaching

Staff will utilize many different resources to teach and support students learning how to engage in school during the COVID-19 pandemic. Various resources from Alberta Health Services will be introduced to teach students hand washing, proper physical distancing protocols, etc.

Use of learning materials

Students will have their own personal school supplies to use that are stored separately. Teachers will plan learning activities to reduce or minimize the need to share equipment, textbooks or materials. If items are shared, they must be cleaned or isolated after use. Students will wash or sanitize their hands both before and after using shared items.

Supporting at-home learning while the student is self-isolating or sick

Consistent with what happens during non-pandemic times, should a child need to stay home for a period due to illness, classroom teachers will provide key work for the student to be able to work on while at home. Homework bundles or tasks will be provided to the student by the regular teacher, but they will not engage in at-home learning like what was experienced in the spring of 2020. Alternatively, for those students who are not severely ill, the teacher could “go live” while teaching and those students at home could connect this way.

Supporting students who require individual/specialized support and medically fragile students

FMPSD will maintain learning opportunities for students specific to their Individualized Program Plan (IPP) using a variety of approaches. Students with complex or differing learning needs will continue to be intentionally included in the learning of the whole classroom. Inclusive Learning will work with Alberta Health Services on COVID-19 safety protocols for the complex medical interventions and supports some students require. Divisional supports, such as occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, psychologists, and physical therapists, will provide service following their professional association guidelines. Some of these services will be face-to-face, but physically distanced where possible. Some of the services will be provided online. These professionals will wear various personal protective equipment in order to minimize risks and protect the classroom cohort.

Substitute teachers

Substitutes for teachers and support staff will be dispatched as per Alberta Health guidelines. Please note: substitutes will wear a mask and follow expected protocols.

Assessment

Teachers follow the Division policy for assessment procedures. For more information go to AP 360 Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting.

Assessment strategies

A comprehensive assessment program provides relevant data for all important educational decisions related to learning - instruction, program improvement and public accountability. It includes a variety of assessments for different purposes:

- provide effective, timely and frequent feedback to students. Feedback is used to improve learning and inform instruction. It is specific to outcomes and criteria, and actionable so students understand next steps
- assessment as learning to develop student independence; students understand where they are in their learning, where they need to be, and next steps to improve
- clear and high achievement expectations foster a culture of continuous improvement. Students understand the learning targets, success criteria, or standards that will be used for assessment as well as the means of evaluation. Parents or guardians have access to the same information
- provide summative assessment opportunities that measure student skills and understanding and not their learning environment. A variety of evidence is gathered through observations, conversations and products and used for the purpose of evaluating and reporting achievement

Evaluation procedures

Procedures used to evaluate student achievement must be designed so that they are fair, accurate, flexible and equitable and motivate students and assess a variety of knowledge, skills and understandings from the Alberta Program of Studies.

Grades are informed by summative assessments and are a consistent, accurate, and meaningful summary of each student's achievement of the learning outcomes at a given time during the school year. They include:

- triangulation: assessment is based on a body of evidence that includes observations, conversations and products to inform a student's grade. Professional judgment requires analyzing a variety of assessment evidence including portfolios, demonstrations of learning, applied projects and performance tasks
- outcomes-based reporting: reporting and communicating academic achievement is based directly on the Alberta Program of Studies which considers front matter, general outcomes and specific outcomes
- most recent evidence: teachers exercise professional judgment when determining overall grades based on most recent and most consistent achievement, observations and conversations

Reporting student achievement

The purpose of reporting is to provide an ongoing summary in relation to Academic Achievement of the Learning Outcomes and Competencies for Successful Learners. Reporting student achievement includes comments for Academic Achievement as well as Competencies for Successful Learners and include areas of strength, areas for growth and/or next steps.

Provincial assessments

Diploma exams are optional for the remainder of the school year. Students and their families can choose whether to write a Diploma exam or receive an exemption for the January, April, June and August 2021 exams. Should students choose to write a Diploma exam, it will continue to count as 30% of the student's final course mark.

High school students enrolled in diploma courses through the E-cademy+ program fall under the same guidelines noted above.

FMPSD has made the decision not to administer the Grade 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) for the 2020-2021 school year.

Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment will be an option for teachers.

Students absent during assessments

Teachers will follow up with students who are absent to complete assessments upon their return to school.

Technology use

The recommended practice of keeping instructional technology clean is to focus on a regularly cleaned device using the assigned cleaning process. This process entails using the provided approved cleaning agent which is sprayed upon the provided cloth (damp not soaking wet) and applied to the device's exterior casing first. A cleaning of the screen and keyboard (where applicable) is also to be completed. This process should be completed during regular intervals if the classroom has a rotating student population and a minimum of once a day for a rooted classroom. A cloth is used to prevent issues regarding warranty concerns if liquid is sprayed directly onto the device.

Students should be encouraged to wash hands or sanitize before entry into the classroom to ensure devices requiring disinfecting remain regularly sanitized.

Technology use in schools

Schools will organize in-person instruction to minimize the sharing of devices such as Chromebooks and iPads. That could mean schools assign technology to specific cohorts at certain times, or to individual students for extended periods of time. Devices will be disinfected between uses according to Division COVID-19 cleaning guidelines.

Technology loaner devices

We will share tech with students who are at home sick/quarantined and in E-cademy+.

Tech and trade academy

Potential: We are proposing an online learning alternative to the traditional Tech Academy courses for next year. We believe an online version could be created, but as of yet has not been.

Subject specific information

Teachers will continue to cover all of the curricular areas with no significant change to hours of instruction. The time spent teaching non-core subjects may be adjusted to allow for additional instructional time on core subjects.

Art

In Art class, students will have their own personal materials. If the art instructional space is a shared classroom, it must be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort of students.

Band

Playing musical instruments may proceed both indoors and outdoors where 2 metre physical distancing is possible between musicians and:

- wherever possible, music performances should be held in outdoor settings to reduce the risk of transmission
- limit the length of playing time indoors to 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute break to allow for air exchange in the room
- musicians should limit the number of performance groups in which they participate
- musicians should wear masks when not playing wind instruments
- musicians should use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content before and after playing
- individuals at high risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 should not play wind instruments, and should not be near those playing wind instruments

Career and Technology Studies (CTS)/Career and Technology Foundations (CTF)

CTS/CTF courses will follow industry guidance provided by Alberta Health Services (cosmetology, foods, industrial arts, etc).

Dance

Schools will follow Alberta Health Services for COVID-19 Guidance for dance:

- students will maintain a 3 metre distance between each dancer
- limit items dancers can bring to the studio space
- dancers should all face the same direction in class
- dancers must not share water bottles
- encourage dancers to not touch their faces during class

Labs

Schools will follow COVID-19 health protocols to determine how to deliver lab-based learning as safely as possible. In some cases, students will participate directly in the learning experience. In other situations, teachers may need to demonstrate the learning experience.

Physical education

Schools will continue to provide physical education instruction. Under the provincial government's Pathway Forward Plan issued February 8, 2021, K-12 schools are allowed to use off-site facilities to support curriculum-related educational activities.

Singing

Singing and vocal performance guidelines include:

- maintaining a minimum of 2 metres distance from other performers at all times
- staggering singers so they are not directly behind one another
- arranging performers so they do not directly face other performers while singing
- avoiding exercises such as lip and tongue rolls or trills as they generate an increased volume of droplets
- limiting vocal activity to 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute break to allow for air exchange in the room
- avoiding sharing musical scores
- rehearsing in separate, smaller sub-groups wherever possible
- limiting the number of vocal groups in which you participate
- wearing masks both when singing and when not singing
- not singing along with performers
- musicians should use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content before and after playing

Work experience

Work experience learning opportunities for students may proceed but with minimal close contact. Students should wear a mask where physical distancing is not possible.

School-based activities

Assemblies and special events

Gatherings that bring multiple cohorts of students together are not permitted at this time. This includes such things as performances, book fairs, guest speakers, school dances, in-person meet-the-teacher events and group fundraisers like bike-a-thons. Virtual assemblies may be held within the school community.

Extracurricular activities (including athletics)

Extracurricular activities, including athletics can be made available at the discretion of the principal and in consideration of a number of factors. The introduction of any extracurricular or athletic activities will comply with current guidelines from Alberta Health Services and the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA).

Schools will inform families as to which activities are available.

Field trips

Under the provincial government's Pathway Forward Plan issued February 8, 2021, field trips may take place in facilities outside of school if students remain in their class cohort and all health protocols are followed. Field trips will be for the use of off-site learning to support curriculum-related educational activities. A decision has not yet been made about international field trips. Current Alberta Health Services recommendations are to limit non-essential travel. This will be carefully monitored for changes on a regular basis.

Graduation

At this time, the Division is following Alberta Health Services guidelines for graduation and will make accommodations based on changes to the provincial recommendation.

Schools may begin to plan celebrations for the class of 2021. These plans must include a COVID-19 contingency plan.

Performance activities

Performance activities that include dancing, singing, acting, playing a musical instrument, and any rehearsal or theatrical performance will follow activity-specific guidelines, as well as:

- 10 participants maximum, including instructors, for lessons, rehearsals and virtual performances
- masks are mandatory at all times, except while playing a wind instrument equipped with a cover intended to prevent droplet transmission
- 3-metre distancing between all participants
- in-person audiences and spectators are not allowed

School council meetings

School council meetings for the 2020–2021 school year will begin as online virtual meetings. We are looking forward to having the meetings back in the buildings and having parents meaningfully engaged in the future.

Supporting mental health and well-being

While many students are excited about the return to school, we recognize that this may be an anxious time for some. The health and well-being of students, staff and school communities will continue to be a priority as we return to learning. We are collectively responsible for fostering safe, caring and welcoming environments that provide a continuum of supports and services for students' physical, social and mental well-being.

More detailed information is available through our [Supporting Student Wellness](#) document.

COVID-19: Guidelines for Parents

COVID-19 Reminders, Tips and Ideas for Parents

Ensure you perform a Self-Screening Assessment with your child before they go to school each day.

Provide support and reassurance: reassure your children about their safety and health; tell children it's OK to be concerned; assure them they are safe, and there are many steps they can take to stay healthy:

- Handwashing: Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing. Turn taps and open doors with a tissue or towel.
- Practicing good cough and sneeze etiquette: Cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow or tissue.
- Stay home when sick: Children should tell parents if they don't feel well, and together, make a plan to stay home from school.

- Keep clean by keeping hands away from the face and mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating well, keeping physically active and getting enough sleep.

Your child's Teacher or Principal will contact you with a plan for Drop-off and Pick-up:

- Times to drop-off and pick-up your child
- Where to drop-off and pick-up your child
- What entrance your child will use to enter the school
- Review recommended foods for lunch and snack breaks
- Remind your children not to share any food or drinks

Families should maintain familiar activities and routines at schools and childcare programs as doing so can reinforce a sense of security for students and staff.

Contact your Teacher or Principal if you require any help or support.

Reminders, Tips, Ideas to Help Control COVID-19 for Students

Ensure you perform a Self-Screening Assessment daily before you go to school, your parents can help you with this

Reminders

- Handwashing: Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing. Turn taps and open doors with a tissue or towel.
- Practice good cough and sneeze etiquette: Cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow or tissue.
- Stay home when sick: IF YOU DON'T FEEL WELL, TELL YOUR PARENTS AND STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.
- Keep hands away from your face and mouth.
- Stay healthy: eat well, keep physically active and get enough sleep.
- Try not to meet in large groups, your teacher will help you with this task by providing reminders and ideas about maintaining physical distancing.

Arriving at School

What you need to know when you arrive at school every day:

- Times for when you will be dropped off or picked up from school
- Where will you be dropped off and picked up every day
- What entrance will you be entering the school
- A schedule will be provided to you telling you where should you go first when entering the school
- Make sure you sanitize your hands every time you enter or exit the school, classroom, gymnasium or other designated area
- Figure out with your parents help what kinds of foods and snacks you are allowed to bring to school
- Don't share any food or drinks
- Bring a refillable water bottle to school. Remember Water Fountains will not be used but water bottle refill stations will be provided
- Mask have become mandatory for Grades 4-12 and all staff, more information will be coming forward on how this will be handled and managed within the schools
- Maintain your routines, as best as you can - Maintain familiar activities and routines at schools and childcare programs as doing so can reinforce a sense of security for students, parents and staff.

Contact your Parents, Teacher or Principal if you have any questions.

Reminders, Tips, Ideas to Help Control COVID-19 for Teachers

Always ensure you perform your Self-Screening Assessment before going to work or school each day. Provide support and reassurance to students about their safety and health. Tell children it's OK to be concerned, it's comforting. Assure them they are safe, and there are many things we can all do to help ensure we stay healthy:

- Handwashing: Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing. Turn taps and open doors with a tissue or towel.
- Practicing good cough and sneeze etiquette: Cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow or tissue.
- Stay home when sick: Children should tell parents if they don't feel well, and together, make a plan to stay home from school.
- Keep clean by keeping hands away from face and mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating well, keeping physically active and getting enough sleep.
- Stay connected: Staff can contact the Occupational, Health and Safety Specialist and Human Resources for information on how to stay safe at work.
- Ensure cleaning supplies, spray bottles and rags are provided for use in your classroom. Also develop a Plan for safe operations within your classroom:
 - Ensure students are sanitizing their hands before and after leaving the classroom
 - Control exit and entrance of students between classes, during lunch breaks and others
 - Attempts should be made to maintain Physical Distancing, Minimum of 2 meters at all times. Develop schedule for recess, keeping in mind to stagger entrance and exits
 - Develop a schedule for lunch and snack breaks
 - Remind students to not share any food or drinks

Contact the Main Office if you require any help or support.

Instructions for Wearing Masks

Wearing a non-medical mask correctly is critical in infection control in conjunction with practicing physical distancing when available, frequent hand washing and or sanitizing and following good respiratory hygiene practices.

Steps for putting on a mask:

1. Ensure your mask is the correct size for your face (S, M, L)
2. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer thoroughly prior to removing the mask from the package, or sealed bag which it is stored in
3. By holding the mask by the ear loops: Inspect the mask; ensure that it is clean, dry and free from tears or other damage
4. Open the mask fully
5. Place the loops of the mask over the ears
6. Adjust the mask on the face ensuring no gaps on the sides and covers the chin
 - a) Touch only the outside of the mask to adjust and seal by pinching the nose piece if one is present
7. Once mask is in place, avoid touching

Steps for taking off a mask:

1. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer thoroughly prior to removing the mask from the package or sealed bag where it's stored
2. Take the loops off from around your ears
3. If reusing a cloth mask, place it in a sealable clean container and or plastic bag
4. If using a disposable mask. place directly into garbage can
5. Re-wash and or sanitize your hands

Other items:

- If you sneeze while wearing your mask replace it with a clean one
- Wash cloth masks with hot water and ensure dried thoroughly before reusing
- Please follow Alberta's [guidance for wearing of non-medical face masks for the general public](#) and the provincial health guidelines for [how to choose and wear a mask](#)

Important note

This document aligns with guidance and health measures for K-12 schools from the Government of Alberta. If this document differs from Government of Alberta documents, the Government documents should be followed.