

PARENTS' GUIDE 2020–21 SCHOOL YEAR



Learning in the 2020-21 school year

Many students will return to in-class learning in September. There are health measures that everyone must follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and help stay safe.

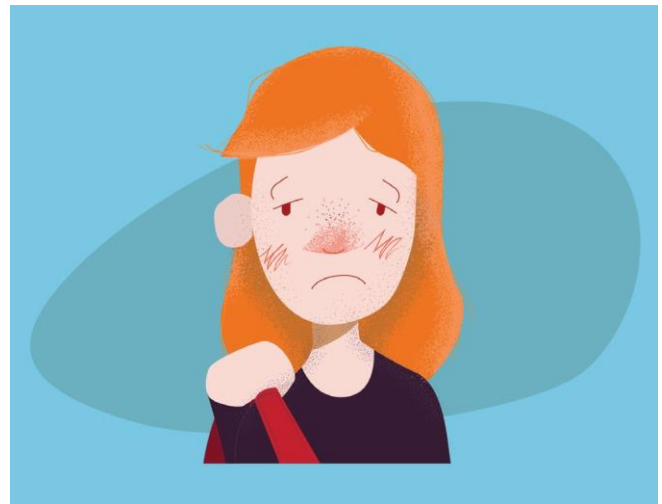
While your school will develop a plan to meet the Ministry of Education's health recommendations, everyone has a role to play.

PARENTS' ROLE IN KEEPING SCHOOLS SAFE

Screen for symptoms every morning

Check every morning to see if your child has any symptoms of COVID-19. If yes, they must stay home from school.

Use the [COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening tool](#).



Stay home when sick or if in contact with someone who is sick

Students must not enter school if they:

- Feel sick or have symptoms of COVID-19
- Have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Have had close contact with someone who is showing symptoms of COVID-19
- Have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days

Mask requirements

Students in Grades 4-12 are required to wear a non-medical or cloth mask indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes, and on school buses.

Students in younger grades are strongly recommended to wear a non-medical or cloth mask and to follow any school policies that may require wearing one.

Students must be able to safely remove a mask in an emergency. Students may be exempt from wearing a mask based on breathing, cognitive, behavioural or developmental needs.

Keep a safe distance

Keep 2 metres between you and others:

- During drop-off and pick-up
- During interactions with a teacher, school staff or other parents and students

Pick up students promptly if they show symptoms at school

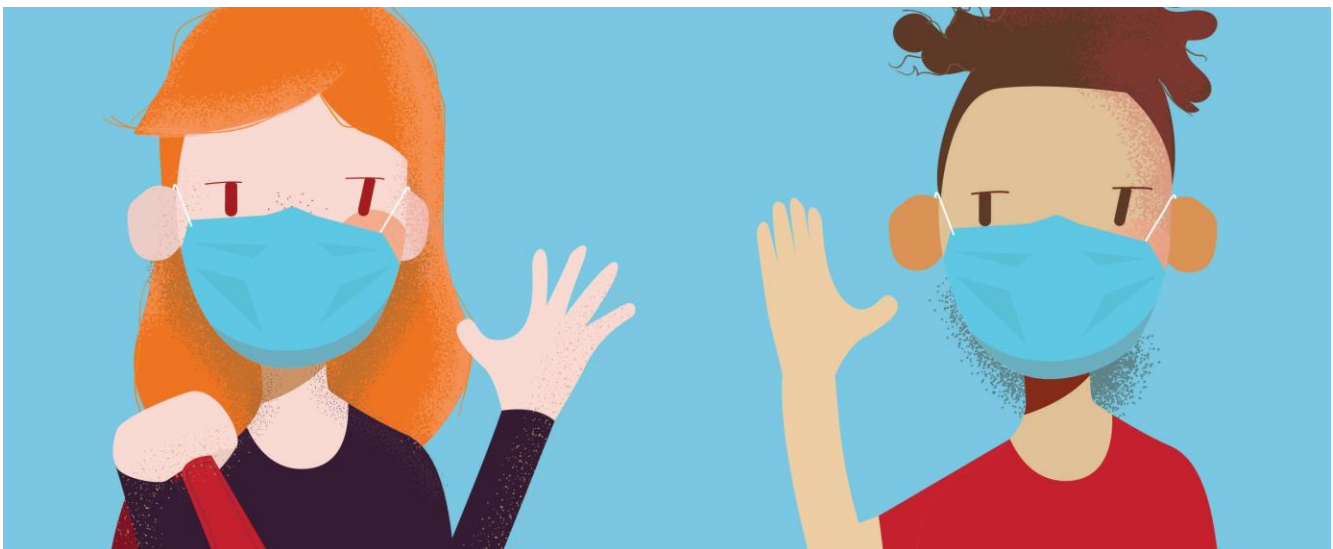
You will be asked to pick up your child from school immediately if they show symptoms. Please ensure the school has your most up-to-date contact information so they may reach you if your child needs to be picked up.

Taking your child to school

Consider using active transportation (e.g., walking, biking) to get to school, if possible.

If your child normally takes the school bus, consider taking them to school if you are able. This may help with physical distancing on buses for students who do not have any other options.

If your child will be taking the school bus, masks will be required, so have them ready at the bus stop.



WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

Talk to your child about some of the new health measures to help them prepare for the first day of school:

Cohort

A cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together.

The risk of COVID-19 is reduced by limiting exposure to others. Staying in a cohort also makes contact tracing easier and faster if there is a suspected case of COVID-19.

- Sanitize hands before entering school and classrooms
- Keep a distance between others and follow marks in hallways
- Wear a mask
- Do not share food or personal items
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow/sleeve
- Tell staff if feeling sick at school
- Lunch and recess time may change to allow for more physical distancing
- Students will be asked to stay in their own cohort to decrease contact with others
- Students who take the bus will have to sit in the same seat every day

Your child may feel nervous about what school will be like. While there will be changes, the key school experience will be the same as before—they will learn in class with their teacher and see their friends.



HEALTH MEASURES AT SCHOOL

Schools will follow detailed health guidelines to prepare for a safe reopening. For example:

- Daily self-screening of students and staff;
- Hand hygiene practices and education for students;
- Masking for students and staff;
- Cohorting and physical distancing;
- Adapted school environments to minimize the interaction of cohorts;
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of school facilities and buses; and
- Restrictions on visitors to limit the number of individuals in schools.

wdgpublichealth.ca/backtoschool

Adapted with permission from the Government of Alberta