



May 23, 2020

Dear parents/guardians and all staff:

As we move into Phase 3 of the Pandemic Plan, I reflect on the last two months. Throughout these months we have appreciated the commitment of our entire school system.

- Our Board of Education has been incredibly supportive to district staff and the entire school district as everyone continues to do what is best for our students
- Our teachers, principals and vice principals, and all support staff who, very quickly, were able to support their student's learning and needs in different, creative and positive ways
- Our maintenance, custodians and bus drivers all working together to ensure we have a safe environment for our children and staff
- Our parents who had to learn new ways of supporting their children's learning all the while trying to either work from home or support others
- Our CUPE Union and our CFTA who worked side by side with us to support each other and the schools
- Our district management staff and board office team who worked tirelessly to keep everything running all the while finding new ways of supporting employees and schools
- The Deputy Minister of Education Scott MacDonald and his team have continued to provide us with strong guidance and leadership throughout these months.

Most importantly, I want to commend our students. Schools are places for students to thrive, where they connect with each other, where learning happens and where memories are made. This has been the most difficult on our students and we are so proud of the way they have handled themselves and how they have worked within this strange "Covid" world. When I receive the emails from parents and staff, that I share on Facebook, about the wonderful work students are doing, I know they are ok! I see the joy on their faces when they are pleased with a project or the fun they are having trying to find new ways to entertain themselves. While most are at a distance, I can see they, along with their families, are making the best of a situation that we never saw ourselves in. We all will never forget 2020, that is for sure!

As you know, we are now in a new phase of learning starting June 1st. We have a working group consisting of representatives from DPAC, Teachers and CUPE, Principals, and district staff in preparation for our return on June 1st. Using the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Health Officer's guidelines, we have an excellent plan in place for students and staff who are returning on June 1st.



We have continued to focus on the four areas that the Ministry of Education has identified. Please be assured these are in order of priority. **Our number one priority is the health and safety of all students, families and employees. Every decision we make is on ensuring safety for all.**

There is an incredible amount of planning and organizing that schools will be doing this week in order for our students to return. Some of our plans may still adjust as we get new information from the Provincial Health Officer and Ministry of Education. As we work with our plans this week, for the most part, there will only be small adjustments.

Schools will be keeping parents and all staff informed throughout the week as they implement the following:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.

- The SD 5 School Protocols can be found under “Keeping our Students and Staff Safe” on the front page of our website [here](#) and this will guide schools on Monday as they work together with the School Occupational Health and Safety Committee and staff to create their own plans. In the documents, you will see a comprehensive guide on supporting a healthy and safe environment. Each school is unique and will need to look at their buildings and the number of students coming back in order to create their plans. Schools will provide the working group and Trustees the plan by next Wednesday and will also share with parents and staff.
- By now parents will have either filled out the survey that went home or the principal has contacted you about sending your kids to school. If you have not heard from your school, please call your principal Monday morning to indicate if your children are returning or are staying home. Some parents have said that they will make decisions on sending their children back once they get more information.

2. Provide services to support children of Essential Services workers.

- Children of Essential Service workers will have access to 5 days per week of in-school instruction and/or school care at the choice of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to return to in-class instruction. Remote or virtual learning remains an option. The District calendar is in effect - non-instructional days are not available. Please fill out the form on our [website](#) and contact your school principal if you need school care for your children.
- Children aged 0-5 (pre-K): essential workers can fill out a form to identify their need for urgent child care. The “Temporary Emergency Child Care for Essential Workers” sign up form and more information, including frequently asked questions, can be found at <http://www.gov.bc.ca/essential-service-child-care> or by calling 1-888-338-6622 and selecting option 4.

For more information click [here](#) for Continuity of Supports.

3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.

- Students with disabilities/diverse-abilities and students who require additional supports will have access to 5 days per week of in-school instruction and/or school care at the choice of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to return to in-class instruction. Remote or virtual learning remains an option. The District calendar is in effect - non-instructional days are not available.



- Some medically fragile students are at higher risk during the pandemic. We are asking parents to check BC CDC website for information <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/priority-populations>.
- It is anticipated that most children requiring in-person instruction in K-12 school settings will be capable of following the District Health and Safety procedures outlined.

For more information click [here](#) for Continuity of Supports.

4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

Guiding Principles:

- Our Stage 3 Continuity of Learning plan will adhere to the existing District Framework where possible.
- We continue to support students working remotely from home with technology as required.
- We will support students' learning in person throughout the district.
- We will provide access to appropriate technology as needed following all safety protocols as outlined in the safety document "link".

For more information click [here](#) for Continuity of Learning Plan.



The Facebook page will be a place where we can celebrate the good things that are happening in School District 5! In order for you to get the updates on your own Facebook page, please "like" our Facebook page so you can keep up to date. For those who don't have Facebook, the Facebook link is on our website.

Please continue to send any photos or videos you would like to share to our CBO email at cbo.mailing@sd5.bc.ca and we will post these on our Facebook page [here](#). We would also love to share examples from parents who are working with their children at home!

Please see the following links from the Ministry of Education for more information:

- [K – 12 Education Restart Plan](#)
- [Continuity of Learning – Planning Guide for teachers](#)
- [WorkSafeBC K – 12 Education Protocols](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on Continuity of Learning](#)
- [Keep Learning](#)
- [BC's Response to Covid-19 Website](#)

Please check out our website for more information at: www.sd5.bc.ca.

We have wonderful, committed staff who have always had your children's best interest at the forefront of their decision-making and they will continue to do that throughout these challenging times.

Take care,
Silke Yardley

