



August 22, 2020

Dear students, parents and staff:

Yesterday, we submitted our District Stage 2 Restart Plans to the Ministry of Education for review. We anticipate the Ministry reviewing them in the next few days and then we will share our school plans with you.

These plans contain overarching district protocols as well as specifics for our individual schools. We know there has been a lot of worry about how our plans will look. I can assure you that our working group, along with school staff, have been working very hard behind the scenes to create solid plans for bringing our students and staff back to school. We have a strong, dedicated staff in SD 5. Through the efforts of our working group and others, our principals and vice principals and with our Board of Education's support, I feel we are very close to being ready to welcome our students and staff back into schools.

Please have a look at our draft [Covid-19 Protocols for School Operations](#) that was sent to the Ministry of Education. Our schools have been working with these protocols to make their own unique school plans.

You will read in our documents that will be sent next week that we are using the term *Learning Groups*. The media refers to these as cohorts. A learning group is a group of students and staff who will remain together throughout a school term (e.g., a school quarter, semester or year) and who will primarily interact with each other. A learning group may be made up of a single class of students with their teacher, multiple classes that sometimes join for additional learning activities, or a group of secondary students within the same courses. We are able to keep most of our learning groups small.

Elementary schools have been organized into learning groups with a maximum of 60 individuals inclusive of staff. Learning groups will be assigned entry and exit doors, as well as specific recess times and outdoor play area locations. This organization will help reduce the number of students in hallways and on outside play areas.

Middle schools have been organized into learning groups with maximum of 60 individuals inclusive of staff. These learning groups (60 or less) will be in two groups. Grade 7, 8 and 9 students will have two core teachers and elective teachers will wear Personal Protection Equipment where appropriate.

Secondary: All secondary schools have altered course access and scheduling. A majority of our schools will have two blocks a day, 10 week model (Quarter System). This will result in our learning groups being well below the 120 threshold in most cases. One of our smaller secondary schools has a modified semester system as their size allows them to keep the model and stay within learning group requirements.



All students will be orientated on all the health and safety protocols including washroom use, hand hygiene, sneeze/cough protocols and staying home when sick.

Below are some more examples of what schools are working on:

- timetabling learning groups
- staggering recesses, lunches
- implementing the directional signs in hallways
- plans on moving students from class to class
- organizing how students come in and out of school
- how supplies are stored
- hand washing protocols
- supporting children with the use of PPE
- health check protocols for parents, students and staff
- ensuring that we have enhanced cleaning procedures in place
- health and safety training for staff
- use of coatrooms, lockers
- supports for parents to prepare your child for school
- communication plan
- virtual assemblies
- student transportation
- curriculum
- students with diverse abilities
- students and staff who are immune compromised.



More information on the specifics for your schools will come out in the school plans, which will be available on individual school websites Wednesday.

Some important information for you in the next while:

- our Board of Education and our District will send out a letter to all on August 26
- school plans will be posted on school websites by Wednesday, August 26
- schools will be sending an invitation to their parents for a Q&A between August 27 – September 1 to answer any questions parents may have



- September 8 and 9: staffs will be meeting together to review all of the protocols for school opening to be prepared to welcome our students
  - There will be two virtual district wide meetings with all staff to share the Covid – 19 Protocols for School Operation on September 8 and 9 (more details will follow)
- September 10 and 11: students will attend. More details will follow on what those two days will look like for our students in the next week.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding during this time. We are really looking forward to welcoming our students, families and staff back to school for the 2020-21 school year.

Please click on our website for the most up to date information at [www.sd5.bc.ca](http://www.sd5.bc.ca).

[BC Ministry of Education: Schools Restart Plan – 5 stages explanation](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf)  
[http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID\\_public\\_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf)

Take care,

Silke Yardley

