

Updated: December 9, 2020

BC's Education Restart Plan - School District No. 52 Prince Rupert

School District 52 Prince Rupert will resume school operations on September 8, 2020, with these four BC Ministry of Education guiding principles:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees
2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential service workers
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students

As a part of ensuring continuity of learning and educational outcomes during Stage 2 of the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines are intended to support K-12 employees, students, parents, administrators, and school community members to:

- Be informed about public health measures and to feel safe in district schools.
- Understand each individuals' role and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting public health and school safety.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

The following Ministry of Education guides have been used in preparing this Restart Plan:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (Updated Sep 3/20)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#) (Updated Sep 11/20)
- [K-12 Education Restart Plan](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

In addition to the Ministry of Education's guiding principles for the COVID-19 response, the Ministry along with our education partners and stakeholders articulated the following principles with respect to health and safety:

- All schools will adhere to the standards, guidelines, and direction from the Public Health Officer (PHO), Work Safe BC, and the School District 52 COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan. Unique school plans will also be created and updated as required with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at each worksite prior to the resumption of classes.
- Psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice will be valued and implemented alongside physical health and safety measures.
- Effective communication with all community partners, parents, students, unions and employees is an essential aspect of successfully implementing these guidelines.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Classrooms and offices are provided with wipes and food grade disinfecting spray to use throughout the day as required.

Schools will implement a cleaning protocol for all common areas and surfaces, including washrooms, equipment, tools, common tables, desks, light switches, and door handles. Those engaged in cleaning will have adequate training and materials.

High touch surfaces and washrooms will be cleaned at least twice per 24 hour period by custodial staff.

Any unnecessary tools or equipment that may elevate the risk of transmission will be removed, including items like coffee makers and shared utensils and plates.

Food and snacks

Breakfast and lunch programs will continue following Provincial Health Office protocols and the District COVID-19 Exposure Plan.

Staff should not prepare food, or share implements and preparation areas.

Physical Distancing Strategies

Schools will be reorganized into Learning Cohorts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Members of the school community who are not part of a learning cohort will be required to physically distance and wear a mask.

Schools will use directional arrows to create one-way flow in hallways where needed to minimize congestion and encourage physical distancing.

Physical distance stickers have been placed 2 metres apart on the floor wherever line ups may occur in schools (i.e. the school offices, and entrances). This applies to Wap Sigatgyet, Learning Services, Maintenance, and the School Board Office as well.

Plexiglass shields have been installed in high traffic areas to protect workers who will have line ups of students and staff from multiple learning cohorts.

Members of the school community, students and staff will receive training regarding physical distancing in their orientations at the start of the school year.

Bus Drivers will be wearing masks, and buses may be fitted with Plexiglass shields to separate the bus driver from passengers.

Hand Hygiene

Members of the school community, students, and staff will receive training regarding hand hygiene at start of the year orientations.

Posters with hand hygiene instructions have been placed in all of district schools and facilities.

Hand Sanitization stations have been installed in entrances and outside of washrooms. Hand sanitization stations have been set up in offices and in every classroom.

Personal Protective Equipment for Students and Staff (including re-usable masks)

The school district has purchased two re-usable masks for each staff member, and each middle and secondary student. The school district keeps an inventory of masks and face shields.

Students in Middle and Secondary Schools are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning cohort whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Exceptions will be made for staff and students who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.

Face shields have also been purchased for staff members who will require them. Those who wear face shields will also be required to wear a mask.

Symptom Assessment and Illness Procedures

Parents will be asked to assess the health of their children before sending them to school. A daily health checklist (COVID-19 Assessment form) will be available on the school district website and printed copies will be available at each school office.

Parents will be advised to use the online COVID-19 Assessment Tool, <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>, or call the Northern Health line at 1-844-645-7811 or 811 if their child is symptomatic. Each school will provide the staff and students (parents/guardians) with a daily checklist to help assess illness. Check symptoms and list any new symptoms.

The Principals/Vice Principals will wait on contact and direction from Northern Health regarding COVID-19 cases in their schools. Northern Health will conduct contact tracing, not the schools. Principals and Vice Principals will advise the Board Office of any confirmations.

Improvements to School Ventilation Systems

Improvements have been made to SD 52 facilities to increase fresh air flow and exchange.

Student Transportation on Buses

Students will be advised that middle school and high school students must wear masks on school buses. Elementary students are exempt from wearing masks.

Bus Drivers will be trained regarding processes of loading students from back to front and offloading from front to back (where possible). Students will sit in the same seat each day and, if possible, sit beside the windows. Students in the same household can sit together.

The Learning Services bus picks up students from around the community and delivers them to a variety of schools. The bus drivers will also be abiding by strict protocols.

Health and Safety Orientation and Training for Staff

School District staff will receive Health & Safety Training and Orientation on September 8 and 9 at all district schools and work sites.

LEARNING COHORTS (Groups)

A learning cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term (e.g. a school quarter, semester or year) and who primarily interact with each other. A learning group could 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 school students with the same courses. In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact.

Examples of what learning groups look like in elementary, middle and secondary schools are in SD No.52. Refer to the “Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts” section for more information. Stage-specific health and safety expectations are subject to change, further to updated public health guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.*

Maximum learning group sizes (inclusive of students and staff)				
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: no limit Middle: no limit Secondary: no limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 60 Middle: 60 Secondary: 120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 30 Middle: 30 Secondary: 60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 30 Middle: 30 Secondary: 30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 0 Middle: 0 Secondary: 0

Learning groups will be smaller for elementary students recognizing that it's more challenging for younger children to maintain physical distance from each other, while older students are better able to minimize physical contact, practice hand hygiene and recognize if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Allowing larger learning groups in secondary schools also enables more flexibility in meeting students' diverse learning needs.

*Source: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>

Learning cohorts (groups) are a recommended public health measure to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Organizing students and staff into learning groups helps to reduce the number of different interactions and potential exposure to COVID-19 and supports better contact tracing if there is a confirmed case in a school community.

What Learning Groups may look like in SD 52:

All Elementary Schools are combining 1 to 3 divisions in their schools to create Learning Cohorts of up to 60 staff and students.

Recesses will be staggered. As an example, at one Elementary School Cohorts 1 and 2 will go out for recess together and Cohorts 3 and 4 will go for recess together. Cohorts will each be assigned an area of the property, i.e. on Monday, Cohort 1 will be on the playground equipment and Cohort 2 will be on the field.

Lunches will be eaten in classrooms: Cohort 1 and 2 will go outside for the first half of lunch break and return to eat lunch in their classroom. Cohort 3 and 4 will eat lunch in their classroom and then go out to the playground for the second half of lunch break. They will be assigned separate play areas as they were at recess.

Prince Rupert Middle School is combining two classes within grade groups to be a Learning Cohort. These learning groups will join together for their exploratory, second language and Physical Education. Each Learning Cohort will have nut break and lunch together and be assigned to a specific area daily for breaks.

Hartley Bay Elementary Secondary school will not need to make any modifications to their school scheduling as they have less than 40 students.

Pacific Coast School has less than the recommended secondary learning cohort size of 120 students, so they will be one learning cohort.

Our high school, Charles Hays Secondary School (CHSS), has 620 students and has moved to the Octa system. Please go to the CHSS website for details. They are building cohorts of much less than 120 staff or students.

Schools will be releasing their school plans on Wednesday August 26th once they have been approved by the Ministry.

Students with Diverse Abilities/Disabilities

Students with diverse abilities/disabilities will have access to all of their typical educational supports and programs. They will continue to be included in regular classrooms, as per usual, and they will be part of a cohort.

Each of our students on Individual Education Plans (IEP) is connected to a Learning Services Teacher, the District Learning Services staff and a counsellor. Schools put together school-based teams that work with the families along with the Principal or Vice Principal responsible for the grade group. These teams are comprised of classroom teachers, learning services teachers, counsellors, aboriginal resource workers, principals, outside agencies such as CYMH or MCFD and the parents and guardians.

The Learning Services Department will be contacting each family to discuss changes in programming and delivery due to COVID-19.

International Students

International Students returning to Canada will be required to self-isolate for 14 days before attending school.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

SD52 will provide all communications through regular channels (Synervice, website, school social media) for parents and partner groups.

All schools will post their site-specific plans for:

- Site access and risk mitigation;
- Cleaning and hand hygiene;
- Physical distancing;
- Learning Cohorts; and
- Scheduled return of students as per Ministry expectations.

Engagement with Indigenous Rights Holders

The District has engaged in conversations with Hartley Bay School in the Gitga'at Nation with whom we have a Local Education Services Agreement. They have 35 students K-12 and will be coordinating a re-start plan. The village remains closed to visitors.

Metlakatla village staff have also been contacted about the District Restart plan and the District and Metlakatla have a Local Education Agreement in place. At the time of this update, Metlakatla is also closed to visitors.

The Aboriginal Education Council will also be contacted for discussions.

Unions (PRDTU and IUOE)

Meetings with the Prince Rupert District Teachers Union (PRDTU) and International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) will occur on a frequent basis. Refer to the School District No. 52 (Prince Rupert) Exposure Control Plan for COVID-19 document for Staff Health & Safety Details.

Parents/Guardians, and Care-Givers

The District Parents Advisory Council meets frequently throughout the school year and represents parents in support of student achievement.

Principals meet regularly with their respective school Parent Advisory Councils to ensure open and transparent communication. These meetings will continue either in-person or through online virtual meetings.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Students will continue to receive service from school-based counsellors. Referrals to community-based services may also be offered.

The Mental Health Literacy Specialist will continue to create District Mental Wellness Challenges each week as well as in-class/online Mental Health Wellness presentations.

Counselling teams will continue to promote District Wellness.

Please refer to the SD52 (Prince Rupert) Exposure Control Plan for COVID-19 for more detailed information.