

DATE: June 8, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Impact on the Division from April 28 to May 25, 2021

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE

STAFF: Laurie Barnstable, Anna Batchelor, Megan Normandeau, Carrie Rosa

REFERENCE: January 12, 2021 Caucus Committee meeting

ISSUE

The Board of Trustees are receiving ongoing verbal and written updates on the Division's efforts to support students and staff and mitigate transmission during the COVID-19 pandemic. Trustees have asked that information be shared regularly at public Board meetings.

BACKGROUND

Information reports about the impact of COVID-19 on the Division were presented at the November 24, February 9, March 9, April 13 and May 11 Board meetings. Every weekday, updates on the number of COVID-19 cases in schools are provided to Trustees via a transmittal memo, to students and families via a [page](#) on the Division website, and to the media via a direct report. Each week, the Superintendent emails an update to all staff.

Division schools continue to do everything they can to mitigate risk by following safety guidelines outlined in the Government of Alberta's school re-entry plan and our Division's Re-entry Strategy. This includes: screening for illness, handwashing and sanitizing, physical distancing where possible, enhanced cleaning standards, strict illness protocols, personal protective equipment (PPE), masks and cohorts.

CURRENT SITUATION

There continues to be incidences of COVID-19 cases in our schools. From April 28 to May 25, 2021:

- We received notice that 225 individuals in the Division tested positive for COVID-19
- 92 out of 215 schools had COVID-19 cases
- 3,420 students were recommended or required to quarantine
- 558 staff were recommended or required to quarantine

Province-wide temporary shift to at-home learning

On May 4, 2021, the [province announced](#) new COVID-19 health restrictions, including a temporary shift to online learning for Kindergarten to Grade 12 starting Friday, May 7. At that time, the province indicated that students would return to in-person learning on May 25. As May 25 was a teachers' day in lieu for the Division and May 26 was a non-operational day, Edmonton Public Schools' students were expected to return to in-person learning on Thursday, May 27.

On Wednesday, May 19, the provincial government confirmed that all students in the province from Kindergarten to Grade 12 would return to in-person learning on Tuesday, May 25 (Thursday, May 27 for our Division). The exceptions to this announcement were students who were already learning online for the remainder of the school year and the region of Wood Buffalo, who remained learning online for another week.

COVID-19 vaccinations for school staff

Vaccine appointments opened to Alberta teachers and school support staff on May 4, 2021, after the [provincial announcement](#) on May 3. The Division continues to encourage all staff who are eligible to book their COVID-19 vaccination.

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