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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Darrel Robertson

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February 9, 2022

Dear parents, guardians and families,

I want to share some additional information with you about yesterday's [announcement](#) from the provincial government to ease COVID-19 public health measures in a three-step plan.

As you are aware, the province announced changes that will impact our schools and students soon. Here's the information we know right now:

Information about masks

Starting Monday, February 14, masks are not required for any student. School divisions were previously empowered to go beyond provincial health requirements (to mandate masking, etc.). In [a letter](#) released from the Minister of Education yesterday, she indicates school boards will no longer have the authority to require students to be masked while attending school or riding a school bus.

I know many of our staff and families have questions about the decision. Because this is a provincial decision, not a Division decision, we have asked the province to share with us the information used to discontinue the student mask mandate. If we receive this information, we will share it with you.

Staff, volunteers, parents and all other adults will be required to wear masks in Division schools until step two of the provincial plan. The tentative date for step two, which includes the removal of all mask mandates, is March 1. The province indicates that this date will be subject to hospitalizations trending downwards. We will provide more information on this shift in the coming weeks.

Mask use encouraged

The Division continues to encourage the wearing of masks to help protect our collective health and safety.

Each family and student will make their own personal decision about whether wearing a mask is right for them. We respect a student's choice related to masking, regardless of what that choice is.

Continued safety measures

The Division will continue to focus on our layered approach to safety measures for the time being, using a number of different protocols to protect health and safety:

- cohorting of students continues for now
- [daily health screenings](#) for students and staff before coming to school and work
- hand hygiene requirements for students and staff
- enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in schools
- well-maintained ventilation systems in schools
- moving individual classes online if needed

Next steps

As we navigate this transition, I know many of you will have questions that we cannot yet answer. I want to reiterate my commitment to providing updates and more information as soon as it becomes available.

I want to thank you for your continued dedication to keeping students and each other safe, and I want you to know that this commitment is recognized and appreciated. There will be challenging times ahead, and I want to reiterate my sincere gratitude for all you have done and continue to do in support of our students.

Sincerely,



Darrel Robertson
Superintendent of Schools

