

November 16, 2020

Dear families, parents and guardians,

Last week, the province announced new [targeted measures](#) to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Alberta. I know you share my concern that cases continue to rise at record levels, especially in Edmonton.

The safety of everyone in our buildings, both students and staff, remains our priority as we start Quarter 2 today. We continually review our [Division Re-Entry Strategy](#) and make changes where necessary to keep everyone safe.

### Impact to schools

As a result of last week's provincial announcement, the Division is pausing the following activities for at least two weeks:

- Indoor extra-curricular recreation or athletic activities
  - Physical education classes are still permitted, with outdoor activities encouraged
- Group dancing or performing activities

The province indicates that group singing is not allowed over this two-week period. The Division continues to look at singing and, at this time, has not reintroduced it into our classrooms. As I mentioned in my last update to you, our Division is creating a committee to look at how we can bring singing and wind instruments back into our schools. This work continues.

### Travel pilot project

As you may be aware, Alberta is participating in an [international travel pilot program](#). The program allows travellers to quarantine for less time if they test negative for COVID-19 upon return and commit to following specific public health and testing measures.

At this time, the pilot program is only available to international travellers arriving through the Calgary International Airport and the Coutts land border crossing. If you are considering travelling internationally and using the pilot program, you're encouraged to review the details on the provincial website; there are a number of restrictions that apply. For example, students may not return to school until they have tested negative on a second COVID-19 test, six or seven days after arriving home. School starts on January 4, 2021 after the winter break. It's important for families to consider the impact on missing in-person instructional time, should you not have your test results back.

**Keeping one another safe**

Unfortunately, we have seen cases of COVID-19 in our buildings because schools are a reflection of what's happening in our broader community. Collectively, we are working hard to keep one another safe. I am proud of our students and staff who wear their masks all day at school, of our staff who stress the importance of hand hygiene and of all those who stay home while sick or experiencing symptoms.

I also want to thank everyone for their understanding and patience, especially those who have been required to stay home in [isolation](#). We are committed to providing instruction to students when they are required to stay home.

Although it seems hard to believe, we're about five weeks away from a well-deserved winter break. By working together to keep one another safe and healthy, I am hopeful that we'll be able to spend that break with the ones we care for. I believe in the power our collective efforts can have in both our schools and in our community.

Sincerely,



Darrel Robertson  
Superintendent of Schools