

# Harry Sayers

## *Restart Strategy 2020-2021*

Updated: September 3, 2020

### **For more information:**

School Principal: Mark Byrne

Phone: 604.852.9665

Email: [harrysayers@abbyschools.ca](mailto:harrysayers@abbyschools.ca)

Website: [harrysayers.abbyschools.ca](http://harrysayers.abbyschools.ca)



## Message from the Superintendent

In July, we released the first draft of Toti:Itcha, our future learning plan, to serve as a framework for how we hoped to fulfill our mission to support each child under the most trying circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. On July 29th, the Ministry of Education released the province's restart plan, providing the most up to date safety protocols and educational continuity guidelines. Since that time, district staff have been preparing to welcome students back to our schools for September by bringing together the Ministry guidelines with our best thinking about how we can fulfill our vision for a world-class, innovative, and individualized educational experience for every student.

As you will see, this updated plan focuses first and foremost on student and staff safety. It outlines the rigorous approaches that will be undertaken by our staff for health assessments, personal hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, physical distancing, masking, and the design of student-teacher cohorts. Our plan also outlines our most creative approaches to providing a quality education. It describes how we will support learning in core academic classes as well as elective and exploratory courses. In addition, we describe how we will ensure that students have equitable access to all our educational services.

I am forever thankful to the very committed people in our district who have helped us navigate these challenging circumstances, and paint a picture of a brighter tomorrow. I have every confidence that the 2020-21 school year will be our most memorable, not because we will have lived through the pandemic, but because we will thrive in our mission to prepare and inspire our students for a lifetime of success, especially when they needed it most.

With great resolve,



Dr. Kevin Godden,  
Superintendent of Schools

## Planning the Return to School

*On July 29<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Education and British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer announced the provincial K-12 Restart Plan for 2020-2021.*

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a rapidly evolving situation that has disrupted the lives of many and has significantly changed the way the Abbotsford School District operates. To guide us through these uncertain times, *Toti:ltcha – our future learning plan* – was developed to serve as a framework for September 2020 and beyond. This document addresses the health, safety, teaching and learning needs and establishes guidelines to fulfil our vision of providing a world-class, innovative, and individualized educational experience for each student.

The Abbotsford School District follows guidelines set by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Officer. These parameters guide the development of our educational programs and continuity of learning plans during COVID-19. The graphic below displays the Ministry of Education's phased approach of instruction, with various stages of school density targets.

The province has decided that students will return to school in September 2020 under Stage 2 of the provincial K-12 Restart Plan.

→ **B.C. K-12 Restart Plan**

→ **COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 School Settings**

British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer and the Minister of Education will continue to monitor developments around the COVID-19 pandemic as they determine how to best keep students, staff and the broader community as safe as possible. This means that, at any point during the school year, the province could decide whether schools across British Columbia, schools in a particular region, or individual schools and classrooms need to move from one stage to another. This decision will always be made by the Provincial Health Officer, in collaboration with education officials.

Our school restart strategy follows the [Abbotsford School District Restart Strategy for 2020-2021](#). This plan is designed to give our families a clear picture of what things will look like under Stage 2 of the provincial K-12 Restart Plan.

Our school district's strategy is developed around key theme – health and safety, teaching and learning – which work together to support a return to school in September.

# Health & Safety

*The health and safety of our staff, students and families is our top priority in our back to school strategy for 2020-2021.*

Health and safety are important organizational priorities and represent a key component of our mental well-being and social-emotional learning (SEL) focus. Protecting each other is the shared responsibility among all members of the school community—we all play a critical role in following the safety protocols set out by British Columbia’s Provincial Health Officer. These protocols are intended to mitigate or reduce the risk of COVID-19, but do not completely eliminate all risk. The provincial restart plan’s focus on safety does not depend on one single strategy, but many strategies that work together to support the safest environment possible within the complex dynamics of a school community.

These strategies include:

- cohorts (learning groups)
- screening for illness
- strict illness protocols
- handwashing and sanitizing
- cleaning standards
- physical distancing
- personal protective equipment (PPE), like non-medical masks

## Cohorts (Learning Groups)

In the provincial restart plan, a cohort (also referred to as a learning group) is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school quarter, semester or year, and who primarily interact with each other. Cohorts decrease the number of close contacts staff and students will have in the school, and will assist public health officials in their efforts to trace contacts and contain a potential COVID-19 outbreak.

Cohorts vary per level across our system.

<p><b><i>Elementary</i></b>  <b>Cohort Size: 60</b>          - Outdoors: Minimize physical contact with others          - Indoors: Maintain physical distance (2m) with peers outside of the cohort</p>	<p><b><i>Middle</i></b>  <b>Cohort Size: 60</b>          - Maintain physical distance (2m) with peers outside of the cohort          - Wear non-medical masks in designated areas</p>	<p><b><i>Secondary</i></b>  <b>Cohort Size: 120</b>          - Maintain physical distance (2m) with peers outside of cohort          - Wear non-medical masks in designated areas</p>
---	---	---

## Screening for Illness

Before coming to school each day, all staff and students must complete the school district’s Daily Health Assessment to determine whether they can attend or must stay home. Daily health assessments are specific to each site across the district. Families will be expected to complete the assessment daily and follow all health instructions, which serve as a tool to assess their child’s wellness before sending them to school. ***Students who have any symptoms noted on the questionnaire cannot attend school.***

All visitors permitted entry to a school or district site must also complete the COVID-19 daily health assessment before entering the building. People with symptoms of COVID-19 or experiencing illness will not be permitted on school district property. All schools and sites will have posters on their front doors reminding people not to enter the building if they feel sick, or if they have had contact with someone who is ill or suspected of having COVID-19.

**Following provincial health guidelines and protocols around illness is a key strategy to slowing down or stopping the spread of COVID-19.**

**We all must do our part and stay home when we are sick.**

### Showing Signs of Illness While at School

If a student or staff member shows symptoms during the school day, they will need to leave the school. When a student presents sick with symptoms similar to COVID-19, the student will be asked to wear a mask (if they can safely do so). Designated staff will also wear a mask and will:

- Isolate the child in a room;
- Contact the parents/guardians to take the child home;
- Clean and disinfect the exposure areas; and
- Notify the school district's Health & Safety Team, who will notify and coordinate appropriate actions with our local public health authority.

### Students who are Immunocompromised

Most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction when safety measures are in place. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with a family physician.

Families with immunocompromised children are encouraged to consult with their medical health care provider to determine the level of risk regarding their child's return to in-class instruction.

**If attending in-class instruction is right for the child:** we will work with parents or caregivers to develop a plan that provides options for learning to ensure appropriate preventative measures are in place.

**If attending in-class instruction is not right for the child:** we will work with families to develop options to continue their child's education at the school or school district level.

### If There is a COVID-19 Case at School

Extra health and safety measures, like handwashing, cohorts, daily health screens, increased cleaning, and masks, will reduce the spread of COVID-19 and help keep our schools safe. Positive COVID-19 cases are only ever confirmed by official public health authorities, in our case, the Fraser Health Authority.

**If a student shows any COVID-19 symptoms at school,** there are safety protocols in place to protect students and staff:

- The child waits in an isolated room;
- The school contacts parents/guardians to take the child home;
- Staff clean and disinfect exposure areas; and
- School district notifies public health officials.

**If a positive case occurs**, our local public health authority will:

- Contact trace to identify potential COVID-19 exposures;
- May recommend testing;
- May recommend 14-day isolation if necessary;
- Get in touch with close contacts; and
- Provide follow-up recommendations as needed, which may include suspending in-class learning.

Parents will be notified if their child has been in contact with a COVID-positive person and needs to self-isolate. Students will receive learning support while self-isolating.

A positive COVID-19 case will not automatically lead to a school closure—it could be that only the group of students and staff who came in close contact will be required to stay home for 14 days. The school district will support students learning at home if they are required to self-isolate. The school district will work with the health authority in making these decisions.

### Handwashing & Sanitizing

Everyone who enters a school or district site will be required to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately. Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands frequently throughout the day.

Schools will provide additional hand hygiene stations throughout the building to support these requirements. It is also encouraged that families send their children to school with personal hand sanitizer.

Schools will also promote proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette with verbal reminders and posters throughout the school.

#### *When students should perform hand hygiene:*

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker).
- Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.).
- After using the toilet.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

#### *When staff should perform hand hygiene:*

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- Before and after handling food
- Before and after assisting students with eating.
- Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
- After using the toilet.
- After contact with body fluids (e.g., runny noses, spit, etc.)
- After cleaning tasks or removing gloves.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

## Cleaning Standards

All of our custodial teams will follow infection control procedures provided by [WorksafeBC](#) and the [B.C. Centre for Disease Control](#) to ensure our buildings are safe and sanitized. Enhanced cleaning practices include:

- purchasing provincially recommended COVID-19 cleaning supplies;
- additional training for custodial staff;
- general cleaning and disinfecting of school district sites at least once every 24 hours
- frequently cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces (like doorknobs, light switches, desks, etc.) at least twice every 24 hours;
- removing any soft furnishings and area rugs from classrooms and common areas that cannot be cleaned to provincial standards; and
- more frequent cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school day, with specific attention to washrooms, high-traffic areas and classrooms.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper-based educational resources to students. Laminated paper-based products should be cleaned and disinfected daily if multiple people touch them.

Our school district is purchasing all COVID-19 cleaning and safety items on behalf of all our schools. This will help ensure all schools use products that adhere to health standards and meet requirements to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. It also ensures that all schools have equitable access to these supplies.

## Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is just one key component of the provincial restart plan. However, it is not always possible, particularly in the school setting. Schools and district sites will put controls in place to ensure physical distancing throughout their buildings, where possible, including in classrooms, hallways, washrooms and common areas.

**Our physical distancing controls include:**

- use of cohorts (learning groups) to reduce the number of close, in-person interactions;
- removing excess furniture in classrooms to make more space to spread student desks and tables farther apart;
- removing and rearranging seating in common areas to prevent students from gathering;
- staggering the times that classes start and end to avoid crowded hallways;
- posting signs and using floor markers to control the flow of foot traffic and support physical distancing; and
- plexiglass barriers at the front desk based on an OH&S assessment.

In situations where physical distancing is not possible (e.g., buses, classrooms and some sporting activities), extra emphasis on hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, not participating when sick and cleaning and disinfecting on a regular basis before and after activities are strongly recommended.

## Masks & Personal Protective Equipment

Not all forms of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be required or used in our district. Non-medical masks are required to be used in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance and is in close proximity to a person outside of their learning group or household.

Students in middle and secondary school are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas, like buses and hallways, or anytime they are outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.

At this time, masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).

**All staff will be provided with two reusable non-medical masks during the first week of school in September. Additional masks and masks for elementary children may be available upon request.**

Wearing a mask or face covering in schools outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice for students and adults. It is important to treat people wearing masks, or not wearing masks, with respect.

Our school restart strategy follows the [Abbotsford School District Restart Strategy for 2020-2021](#). This plan is designed to give our families a clear picture of what things will look like under Stage 2 of the provincial K-12 Restart Plan.

Our school district's strategy is developed around key theme – health and safety, teaching and learning – which work together to support a return to school in September.



## School Operations

*We look forward to welcoming students and staff back into our classrooms and buildings in September. It will be different in many ways, but we are committed to working together to ensure their health and safety.*

We want to help students, families, and staff better understand how schools will operate and what teaching and learning will look like in 2020–2021. In this section, you will learn more about what a typical school day will look like this year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Our School Schedule

Our schedule for students will include a staggered start for morning and dismissal. Students names will be color coded as to their start and dismissal times. A sample of this might look like 840 start and 210 dismissal. Students will be dismissed by family groupings to allow siblings and families to connect and leave the school. Parents are expected to wait away from the exterior doors while students are entering and leaving. All students will enter and dismissed using the exterior doors to the classrooms. Parents wishing to speak with teachers must continue to make an appointment.

### Arriving at School

When students arrive at school, they will:

- follow signage to determine their school entry point;
- follow physical distancing guidelines to stay at least two meters apart while they wait outside and to line up when it is time to enter the school; and
- wait for staff to direct them into the school.

School staff will be outside to remind students of these requirements, and to help students line up and keep an appropriate distance from each other.

During extreme weather, such as rain or severe cold, schools will have a plan in place to ensure student safety. This will be communicated to parents by the school's principal in the early fall.

Adults bringing students to school will be asked to stay in their vehicle or outside the school, and to maintain a safe physical distance between themselves and others. Those who need to enter the school must book an appointment with the school office in advance, and will be recorded in the school's visitor log. Individuals without an appointment will not be able to enter the school.

Parents and guardians of children who have complex needs and require support to enter the building should contact their school office in late August. Staff will work to develop a plan that is safe for both students and staff.

### COVID-19 Signage on Entrances

All school doors will have COVID-19 signs posted to indicate that anyone with symptoms cannot enter the school.

Additionally, all school district sites will be closed to the public to reduce the risk of exposure. Entry will not be permitted unless an appointment has been made with the school office.

### **Hand Sanitizer & Hand Washing**

As soon as staff and students enter a school or district site, they will be required to use hand sanitizer or immediately wash their hands. Schools will create plans to support hand hygiene by considering washroom locations, the number of students entering the school and other relevant factors.

Schools will provide hand sanitizer throughout the building to support these requirements. It is also encouraged that families send their children to school with personal hand sanitizer.

### **Traffic Flow within Buildings**

All district sites will use a variety of visual cues to help indicate traffic patterns. Schools may use arrows, standing dots or other various floor markers to help students maintain physical distancing and understand traffic patterns within the school.

Within the school, foot traffic arrows will indicate the direction of flow. Areas such as the gymnasium, library and multipurpose will have specific entrance and exit doors.

### **Assigned Seating in Classrooms**

Students may be asked to follow assigned seating plans throughout the day in the classroom, including for eating lunch. Assigned seating is a strategic option to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 throughout a cohort of students. It will also support health contact tracing should that be required.

Student work areas will be arranged with social distancing in mind. Additional desks with separate students from each other while working and learning. In areas where no individual desks are assigned students will have identified areas.

### **Student Supplies and Learning Materials**

Students will have their own personal supplies that are stored separately. Teachers will plan learning activities to reduce or minimize the need to share equipment and materials. If items are shared, they will be cleaned and disinfected after use. Students will wash or sanitize their hands both before and after using shared items.

### **Washroom Protocols**

Washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout the day. There will be a maximum number of students permitted in the washroom at one time. Depending on the size of the school and the location of washrooms, schools may assign classrooms and students to specific washrooms.

Occupancy signs are posted at the and near the washroom entrance. Markers are place in the hallways floor where students are expected to wait. Signage is posted within the washroom with respect to hand washing procedures.

### **Water Fountains/Filling Stations**

Access to water will not be restricted. Water fountains will be open and available for use. Students and staff are encouraged to use personal water bottles. When using water fountains, students and staff should practice hand hygiene before and after use and not place their mouths on the fountain.

Water fountains are classified as a high touch area and will be cleaned frequently by our custodial teams.

### Common Areas

Schools will have measures to promote physical distancing in spaces where students often gather, such as foyers, learning commons or T-intersections in hallways. Measures will include:

- limiting the number of students allowed in certain areas at certain times;
- requiring students to walk straight through some areas, so they don't crowd together in groups; and
- having staff supervise high-traffic areas and remind students to adhere to physical distancing protocols.

Signage (posters, floor markers, etc.) will be present around school offices and other high-traffic areas to tell students and staff to keep a safe physical distance. There will also be a maximum number of individuals permitted in the school office at one time. Schools will also develop protocols to mitigate risk in other spaces, such as staff workrooms and utility spaces. Again, parents are required to call the office and book an appointment time if it is necessary for them to be in the school.

### Lunch

It is important for students who stay at school for lunch to remember to bring their lunch each day—schools can not accommodate family members who want to drop off lunches. If a student forgets their lunch, families should phone the school to work out a solution. Students will store lunches with their other personal belongings.

All students must wash their hands before eating, and must eat only their own food. Under provincial health guidelines, students are not permitted to share food. At this time, microwaves will not be available to students, and vending machines will not be operating. Students will remain in their cohort to eat their lunch.

Under Stage 2, schools will be able to hire noon hour supervisors to help supervise students. These staff must adhere to all COVID-19 health protocols and will not be able to enter the school grounds if they have symptoms of illness.

When scheduling lunchtimes, schools will make sure students have a full fifteen minutes to eat their lunch.

### Food in Schools

There are clear provincial guidelines around food in schools during COVID-19. As a result, treats cannot be sent from home for birthdays or other special days, and teachers will not hand out food or treats in the classroom. Potluck events, barbecues, food trucks or special lunch days (e.g. hot dog day) are all postponed at this time.

Additionally, schools will not be able to support any food being brought into the school through a food delivery service (such as pizza or Skip the Dishes).

## School Meal Programs

Schools that offer school meal programs will need to adhere to the following provincial guidelines:

- only designated staff will be permitted in food preparation areas
- partner staff responsible for operating the school meal program will be allowed in the school to help deliver the program
- partner staff must adhere to all COVID-19 health protocols and will not be able to enter the school if they have symptoms of illness
- all food served to students needs to be served in prepacked portions or served to students by designated program staff
- utensils will be used any time food is served to students
- there will be no shared food condiments or seasonings, such as ketchup or salt and pepper
- any leftover food will be thrown out—schools will not be able to package leftovers to send home to families

## Dismissal Times

Schools will take measures to prevent crowding in hallways and to support appropriate physical distancing, including:

- assigning a specific exit door to each student
- staggering dismissal times slightly, if needed— this staggered schedule may differ slightly from the school's regular bell schedule

Adults who come to pick up students from school will be asked to stay in their vehicle or outside the school, and to maintain a safe physical distance between themselves and others. School staff will bring students outside to meet the adults who are picking them up.

Parents are reminded that they are to wait away from the exterior doors in the grassy areas or blacktop. Students will be dismissed at 210, 220 and 230 according to their family groupings.

## Recess and Playground Equipment

Students will remain in their assigned learning cohort for recess activities. Schools will ensure each cohort has an area outside that supports physical distancing and promotes play and physical activity. Schools may stagger break times or assign student cohorts to specific areas of the schoolyard. Before and after school, school staff will be assigned to supervise areas outside school entrances. This supervision will help support physical distancing and is part of our district's COVID-19 restart strategy.

Schools will not be assigning staff to supervise playground equipment before and after school. To support safety, this equipment will be off-limits to students and families during these times. Families who wish to take children to the playground at other times of the day are encouraged to follow the province's Guidance for Playgrounds to use the equipment as safely as possible.

Students will be given assigned play groups and play areas within the PHO learning guidelines. Students should expect to be outside for the majority of their unstructured time. Recess, Lunch and Eating periods will be staggered

to allow for all students to be outside.

### Library Learning Commons

Schools will use the learning commons or school library space as instructional space as needed. Schools that decide to use this space for instruction must follow COVID-19 strategies that support physical distancing. These spaces will be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort of students.

If the space is used for instruction, students and staff are required to wash their hands before entering and after exiting the space. When staff are assigned to work in the library, all hard surfaces and the overall space will be cleaned and disinfected daily according to COVID-19 cleaning standards.

### Open/Closed Campus School Communities

Schools across the district remain closed campuses.

### Volunteers and Visitors

In-person visitors and volunteers will not be allowed in schools at this time. This includes guest speakers, sports-team coaches and artists in residence. Individuals are encouraged to communicate with the school through email or by phone. Currently, PAC and parent volunteers are permitted in the school building only with a pre-scheduled appointment and following all COVID-19 health and safety guideline.

Individuals authorized to enter the school include Canada Post, delivery and maintenance personnel who support the running of the school, district personnel and emergency responders. These people will only enter the school if the school's Daily Health Assessment indicates they are safe and have no symptoms. They must also sign the school's COVID-19 visitor log. Individuals entering the school will be requested to wear a mask.

### District Staff Entering School Buildings

At this time, under Stage 2, all school district staff are permitted to enter school buildings as required. This includes teaching and learning support staff, Teacher Teaching on Call (TTOCs), facilities and maintenance personnel, I.T. personnel, etc. These people will only enter the school if the school district's Daily Health Assessment indicates they are safe and have no symptoms. They will be required to wear a non-medical mask in situations where they cannot physically distance. They must also sign the school's COVID-19 visitor log.

### Family and School Communication

Families can stay in contact with their schools through their school website, email and phone. *Families who need to go into the school must book an appointment in advance.* Family members with a scheduled appointment will need to complete the school's Daily Health Assessment before going to the school to determine if it is safe for them to attend. Family members may be requested to wear a non-medical face mask.

Families who are contacted to pick up a sick child can attend a school site immediately. The person picking up the student must be safe to enter the school based on the school district's Daily Health Assessment. Family members attending the school for any reason will be asked to complete the school's COVID-19 visitor log. They will be asked to wear a non-medical mask in places where they cannot ensure physical distancing.

Throughout the school year, families can expect regular and frequent communication from their child's teacher, school administration and school district leadership.

## Transportation

### *Eligibility*

The Provincial Health & Safety Guidelines that guide the work of school districts have resulted in changes that we will need to make to our district's student transportation services.

The priorities for student transportation services are as follows:

1. Students with special and/or unique needs as determined by the Learning Support Services Department, including First Nations students.
2. Elementary and middle students living outside the walk limits of their catchment school.
3. Students force transferred to a school outside their catchment.
4. Secondary students living outside the walk limits of their catchment school.
5. Elementary and middle students attending district programs.
6. Secondary students attending district programs.
7. Students living within the walk limits to their catchment school.

The health and safety of students and bus drivers is a top priority. To effectively meet all Stage 2 requirements, the school district can *only* provide transportation services to:

- students in priorities 1 through 4;
- elementary students in the Traditional program (King Traditional);
- middle students in French Immersion; and
- secondary students in French Immersion.

***School District transportation services will only be provided to students who are registered for transportation and have a valid bus pass.*** Only these students will be included in bus seating plans established by the Transportation Department.

### *Health & Safety Measures for School Buses*

Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in [BCCDC's Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document.

Plexiglass shields either will be installed enclosing the driver's compartment. Bus drivers must wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) when they cannot maintain physical distance or be behind a physical barrier in the course of their duties. Middle and secondary students must wear a non-medical mask or face coverings on buses. These should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading.

Students with COVID-19 symptoms or experiencing illness will not be permitted on the bus. Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory diseases before sending them to school.

An essential physical distancing strategy is the implementation of **bus passes** for the 2020-2021 school year. Students who do not have an issued school district bus pass will not be permitted entry on the school bus.

Families are encouraged to consider alternate forms of transportation for their children to and from school if they are not comfortable with their child riding on the school bus with other children.

### Emergency Procedures

The school district will be working with the City of Abbotsford Police / Fire & Rescue to investigate options that allow emergency drills (such as fire drills or lockdowns) to reflect COVID-19 safe protocols.

### 2020–2021 School Calendar

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Education announced the implementation of Orientation Week for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result, the first day of school for students will be delayed to September 10<sup>th</sup>, which will be a full day of instruction. Students who have opted for a “Transition Program”, will begin on September 21<sup>st</sup> with more details to follow.

With the exception of the first week of school, the approved 2020–2021 school district calendar will remain in effect for the entire school year, regardless of the provincial re-entry scenario designated by the province.



### 2020-2021 School Calendar

July	August	September
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

  

October	November	December
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

  

January	February	March
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

  

April	May	June
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

  

Statutory Holiday
School Vacation
Pro-D Days = Oct 23, Nov 27, Jan 29, Feb 12, May 21
Admin Day = Sept 25
Parent Teacher Interviews = Oct 22
1 Hour Early Dismissal = Dec 2 & 3, Mar 10 & 11
Days of Instruction

  

- Summer Holidays = 10 weeks (Jun. 29 to Sept. 7)
- Christmas Holidays = 2 weeks (Dec. 21 to Jan. 1)
- Spring Break = 2 weeks (Mar. 15 to Mar. 26)

  

- September 8 - First Day of School
- October 12 - Thanksgiving Day
- November 11 - Remembrance Day
- December 21 to January 1 - Christmas Holidays
- January 4 - Schools Reopen
- February 15 - Family Day
- March 15 to March 26 - Spring Break
- March 29 - Schools Reopen
- April 2 - Good Friday
- April 5 - Easter Monday
- May 24 - Victoria Day
- June 29 - Last Day for Students
- June 30 - Last Day for Teachers

  

Semester 1	Semester 2
Starts Sept. 8, 2020 (88 days)	Starts Feb. 1, 2021 (90 days)

  

Hours of Instruction Per Day
Elementary = 293 minutes (4h 53m)
Middle = 295 minutes (4h 55m)
Secondary = 318 minutes (5h 18m)

Approved by the Board of Education March 10, 2020.

## Teaching & Learning

*We are committed to providing meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for each student and will continually adapt our methods of instruction and assessment in response to the pandemic.*

### Parent Options

As we prepare for 2020–2021, we know that all of our students need access to high-quality instruction. We also recognize that in-class instruction might not be appropriate for all families and staff, depending on their personal circumstances and well-being. That is why we are offering several options for our families.

In addition to regular in-class instruction following the Provincial COVID-19 Guidelines in their current school, parents will also have the option to school a school/family of school transition program, home school, or distributed learning options.

Before selecting an alternative to in-class instruction, however, parents should carefully review this plan to understand their options based on your child's needs.

#### *In-class Instruction*

In September 2020, all schools in British Columbia will start-up in Stage 2 with the goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students within the revised public health guidelines to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Having students in the classroom helps to minimize learning gaps and provide the academic, social and emotional supports essential for learning. In the event that the provincial health authority determines it unsafe to continue at Stage 2, all schools and classes will be directed to Stage 3 (with 50% student density).

#### *Homeschooling and Distributed Learning*

Parents may choose to enroll their child in either homeschool or distributed learning options, both of which are offered at [Abbotsford Virtual School](#). Homeschooling is an alternative method of teaching offered outside the B.C. educational system. Typically, a family member is responsible for delivering the entire educational program to children at home. Distributed learning is available for students in grades 8-12 who can complete individual courses online under the direction of a District teacher.

#### *Transition Program (Under Consideration)*

Instruction will be provided online each morning. The face to face learning time will focus on social and emotional learning and core academics and competencies which are central to the curriculum and foundational to all learning. In this model, families will have some choice about where their children do their learning, at home with parent support or at school with their transition learning group. The In-School portion will begin with one afternoon per week and gradually increase to three afternoons per week. The intent of the gradual increase in face to face instruction is to develop comfort and confidence in returning to school. Note: Due to staffing limitations, the Transition Program may not be available in French Immersion.

***Please note that movement between learning models (in-person, transition, distributed learning, and homeschool) during the year will be limited depending on available space.*** There may be a waiting period for admission to your school, depending on the scheduling and availability of classroom spaces. Families must make a



decision by Friday September 4<sup>th</sup> and declare that preference to their child's school.

### StrongStarts, Preschools and Daycares

All StrongStart locations will open on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Locations and schedules will be available on the school district website mid-September. Before and after school care programs will be in operation by September 14<sup>th</sup>. Pre-schools will be in operation by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Parents needing this service should contact their around/preschool service provider.

### Kindergarten

Specific information regarding Kindergarten start-up and the gradual entry process will be communicated through the district's and specific school's websites by mid-September. Full-time Kindergarten will begin on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Elementary

**Elementary students will be in school full-time five days per week.** Carefully constructed elementary cohorts of 60 students and staff (or fewer) will be established for the first term. Classroom teachers and educational assistants will be assigned to provide direct educational programming and wrap-around services to diverse children.

A modified bell schedule will be implemented at each school to reflect staggered start, recess, break and dismissal periods and accommodate reduced traffic flow within the building at one time.

School Start- Staggered start from 8:40-9:00; attendance complete by 9:10, organized by family groups

Recess Break- Staggered playtimes starting at 10:00 completed by 10:40, organized by learning groups

Lunch Breaks- Staggered eating and playtimes starting at 12:00-1:00

Dismissal- Staggered starting at 2:10, 2:20, 2:30 by family grouping

### Assessment

Teachers will continue to assess students throughout the school year. We will continue to support the implementation of assessment for learning strategies by providing teachers with professional learning opportunities. These opportunities will allow teachers to increase their capacity to effectively employ assessment in a blended environment that honours student voice, choice, and equitable access to learning.

### Communicating Student Learning

We are committed to communicating student learning to students and families. This will be done in formal and informal ways throughout the year. The district follows the guidelines of the Ministry of Education to ensure that student reporting policies are consistent with provincial expectations. These policies include expectations about interim reports as well as term and final report cards.

Many of our teachers also use online communication tools to provide students and families with information about learning throughout the year. These online tools are used to keep students and families informed, as well as allow students and families to engage in the communication process. Teachers may use the following online tools to communicate various levels of student learning:

- **Elementary:** Seesaw, Check My Progress Report Cards, Google Classroom, School Website

## Equitable Support for Diverse Learners

To ensure equitable access to learning, we will pay specific attention to the diverse needs of our students. Integrated school-based teams will prepare for differentiated supports for vulnerable students. A school-wide approach will be taken to addressing the impact of distance learning on underserved and/or vulnerable students. These students will be prioritized for higher access to daily interventions. These students will also have access to enhanced transition support to start the school year. This includes connecting with families of students who are medically fragile and ensuring that Learning Services Teachers collaborate closely with classroom teachers on student IEPs.

### *Diverse Learners*

To ensure all of our learners with diverse needs are supported in the best possible way, a wide range of services and supports will be made available. This includes flexible learning options, mental health supports and access to technology (both device and WIFI). Both school and district LSS teachers will be available to support the differentiated learning environment and the goals and objectives in a student's IEP.

### *ELL Learners*

To support new families and/or students who are English language learners (ELL), teachers and the English Language Learning Department will provide supports in person and electronically to ensure the success of each student.

### *Indigenous Learners*

In collaboration with classroom and non-enrolling teachers, Indigenous Support Workers and Indigenous Support Teachers will provide a range of supports to our Indigenous students and families. Cultural activities will be provided in partnership with key Indigenous stakeholders (First Nations, Metis Association, Sto:lo Nation).

## International Students

Only international students already here in Canada and who have pre-registered for the 2020–2021 school year will be accommodated.

The province has indicated that after Canada lifts current travel restrictions and non-essential travel resumes, international education programs can resume. International students would need to follow quarantine requirements and any relevant public health orders.

## Curriculum Resources to Support Continuity of Learning

We are coordinating in-person and online teaching to make sure students across the district learn key concepts of the curriculum at the same time during the school year. This will ensure that students who shift between in-person and online learning groups in 2020–2021 can do so without disrupting the continuity of their learning. It will also help keep students on track if they need to miss school due to illness or to self-isolate.

## Use of Technology

Students may be encouraged to bring their own devices to school. In most cases, we recommend Chromebooks because they work with the Google Suite of tools we use across our school district. Students who bring their own device will be responsible for taking it home to charge it every night. Families in need of technology should connect with their school principal.

## Subject-Specific Information

### *Physical Education*

Schools will continue to provide physical education instruction. The province's plan indicates that the delivery of programming outside is most desirable, and activities that support physical distancing, such as badminton, are recommended. Sharing equipment is discouraged. Equipment that is used must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use. Students must wash or sanitize their hands before and after using the equipment. The use of lockers in the change room will not be permitted.

### *Music*

All classes, programs and activities (e.g. Band, Choir) can continue to occur where:

- physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group;
- physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for middle and secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groups;
- physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups when indoors.

No in-person inter-school competitions/events will occur until further notice. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.

Wind instruments may only be used where there is access to a sink and instrument cleaning protocols are being strictly adhered to. No instruments will be shared at this time in accordance with Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19 developed by the B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C.

### *Art*

Students will have their own personal materials. If the art instructional space is a shared classroom, it must be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort.

### *Labs*

Schools will follow COVID-19 health protocols to determine how to deliver lab-based learning as safely as possible. In some cases, students will participate directly in the learning experience. In other situations, teachers may need to demonstrate learning.

### *Assemblies and Special Events*

Gatherings that bring multiple cohorts of students together are not permitted at this time. This includes such things as performances, book fairs, guest speakers, school dances, in-person meet-the-teacher events and group fundraisers like bike-a-thons. Virtual assemblies may be held within the school community.

### *Extracurricular Activities (including Athletics)*

Schools will evaluate whether they can offer extracurricular activities that follow COVID-19 protocols, and let families know which activities are available. Inter-school competitions are not permitted at this time.

## Mental Health & Well-Being

*We know that COVID-19 is causing a lot of uncertainty for students, staff and our school communities. Mental health and well-being will be a strong focus for us.*

### Supports for Students & Families

Our focus will be on rebuilding the community using a relationship-based approach to support safety, belonging, and inclusion. Our staff will be supported in providing a relationship-based perspective in all aspects of student interaction, whether in-person or online. Every student will continue to have access to supports and services to address mental health concerns through our existing referral process. Learning Services staff will provide direct (counselling) support and facilitate referrals to community mental health services for students.

To support students and families, our school district has developed a set of mental health resources that will be released in the coming days and available on our school district website.

Parents or guardians who are concerned about their child's well-being can also reach out to these community resources:

- **Kid's Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868**  
*Call to speak to a professional counsellor —available 24 hours a day.*
- **Health Link: 8-1-1**
- **Foundry: [www.foundrybc.ca](http://www.foundrybc.ca)**  
*Access virtual drop-in counselling sessions, peer support check-ins and group offerings to young people ages 12-24 and their caregivers.*
- **B.C. Parent**  
[Reduce Stress & Prepare for Back to School COVID-19 Resources](#)

*Visit [www.abbyschools.ca](http://www.abbyschools.ca) for more mental health and well-being resources available to families and students.*

In addition, the school district, in collaboration with DPAC, will offer a series of workshops for parents designed to assist in navigating learning with your child for the year. Registration information will be available on the district website.

### Supports for Staff

Staff mental health and wellness will play a vital role in supporting students through this pandemic and beyond. The [Bring Your Best](#) program is designed to ensure employees have the support to be healthy, productive and enjoy their work.

The following structure outlines additional strategies to support staff mental health and wellness:

**Personal and professional development opportunities to increase knowledge and skills. Examples include:**

- Health and well-being sessions hosted by Learning Support Services and Human Resources;
- Respect in the Workplace training;
- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction training;
- Mental Health First Aid training;
- Sessions on SEL for educators; and
- Health and Safety training.

**Opportunities to engage in more personalized learning and supports.** *Examples include:*

- Communities of practice and collaboration with others in specific areas of wellness;
- Personal strategies for self-care and stress management;
- Interpersonal and team strategies to build relationships and connection amongst adults;
- Employee and family assistance program;
- Ergonomic assessment and support; and
- Accommodation, prevention and support for recovery from illness and injury

**Our school restart strategy follows the [Abbotsford School District Restart Strategy for 2020-2021](#). This plan is designed to give our families a clear picture of what things will look like under Stage 2 of the provincial K-12 Restart Plan.**

**Our strategy is developed around key theme – health and safety, teaching and learning – which work together to support a return to school in September.**