

# **GWA'SALA-'NAKWAXDA'XW SCHOOL**



**COVID 19  
RE-ENTRY PLAN 2020-2021  
PARENT INFORMATION**

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## Letter from School Principal

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year. I hope all our families have had a restful and safe summer.

During this unprecedented time we know that there is some anxiety from families about returning to full-time in-class instruction. As a result, the school has developed a comprehensive set of guidelines within our *COVID-19 Re-Entry Plan* that prioritizes the health and safety of students and staff.


These guidelines outline all the measures that schools will be implementing in September and include:

1. Orientation Week (September 8-11). Scheduled meeting with to allow parent and student to meet to review new procedures and safety protocols.
2. Gradual Re-Entry to allow staff opportunities to teach new protocols for the first couple weeks with smaller class sizes.
3. Implementing robust illness policies for students and staff (daily self-assessment before entering the school, requirement to stay home if sick).
4. Reinforcing regular hand washing and respiratory etiquette.
5. A requirement that masks be worn by all staff, in common areas with high traffic such as hallways, and outside of the classroom or learning group when physical distancing is not possible.
6. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
7. Organizing students/staff in learning groups to reduce in-person interactions.

When combined, these measures will allow the school to ensure that we maintain safe learning and teaching environments.

Our staff will be reaching out next week to directly to our families to organize meetings during orientation week. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at the school if you have any questions.

Gilakas'la,

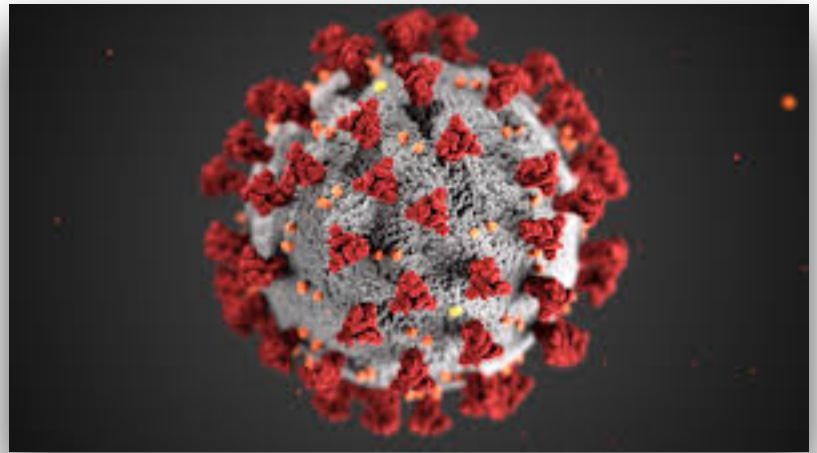


Reed Allen  
Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School Principal

## General Information

### What is COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses found mostly in animals. In humans, they can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). The disease caused by the new coronavirus has been named COVID-19.



### Symptoms

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and the common cold. Symptoms include coughing, fever, sore throat and difficulty breathing.

### Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



### How is the virus spread?

COVID-19 is spread by liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The contaminated droplets can enter the body through the eyes, nose or throat if you are in close contact. The droplets quickly fall to the ground or land on surfaces that an infected person touches. The droplets do not linger in the air.

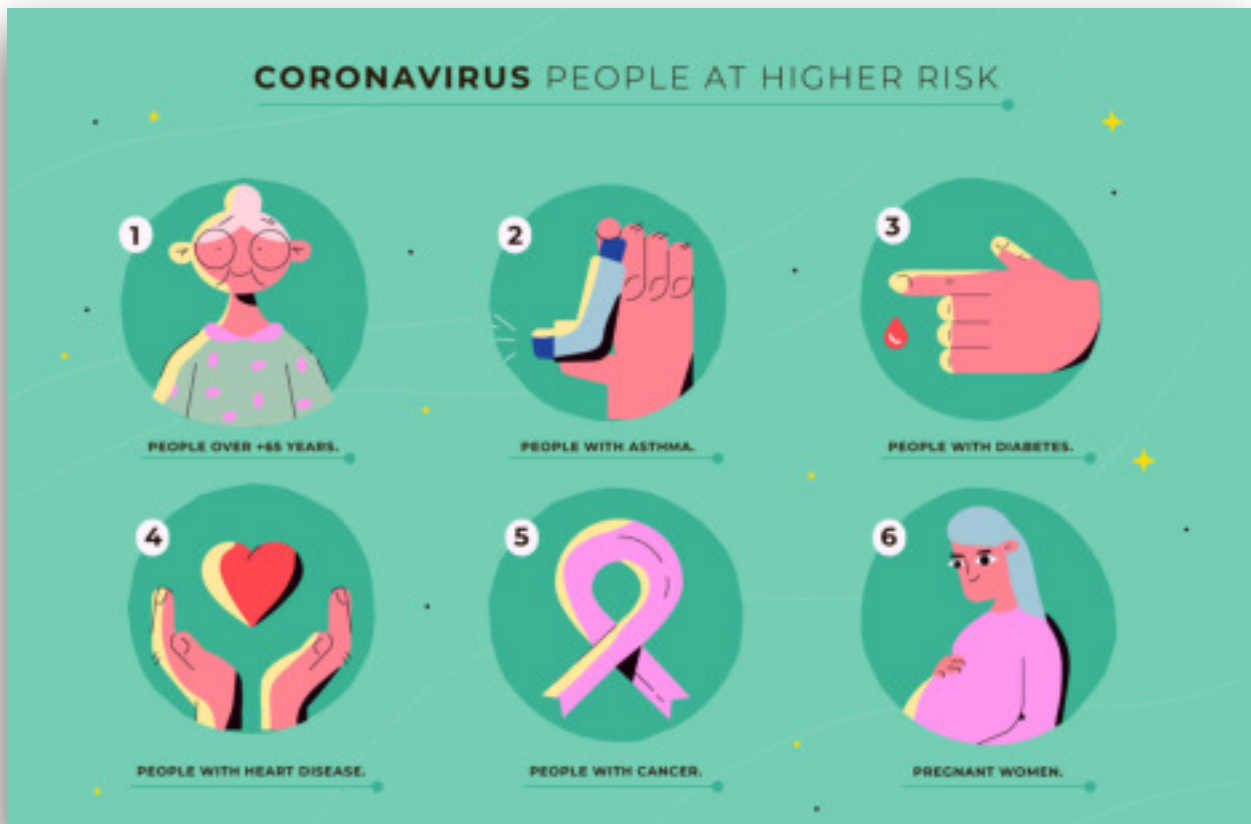
The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmitted through the particles floating in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin.



### Who is at risk?

Elders, people with chronic health or respiratory conditions, people with compromised immune systems due to disease or treatment, and pregnant women have a higher risk of getting serious complications if they become sick.

Because COVID-19 is a new virus to the human population, there are currently no vaccines developed to prevent infection. Research and development of a COVID-19 vaccine are underway. It generally takes 12 to 18 months to develop a vaccine for a new disease and to produce enough vaccine for large populations.



## Prevention and Protection - How to Avoid and Limit the Spread of Infection

### Hand Washing

The most important thing you can do to prevent infection is to wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If a sink is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands. Although COVID-19 does not appear to be spread by eating food contaminated with the virus, be sure to wash your hands before preparing or eating food.

### Cough Etiquette

If you need to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue to limit the spread of infection. Throw the tissue away and wash your hands afterwards.

### Physical Distancing

Physical distancing means protecting your personal space by staying at least two metres (six feet) away from other people. Physical distancing is essential to preventing the spread of COVID-19. During the pandemic, we need to avoid using the usual greetings, such as handshaking, hugging and kissing. Safe greetings include a wave, nod or elbow tap are appropriate.



### Social Gatherings and Travel

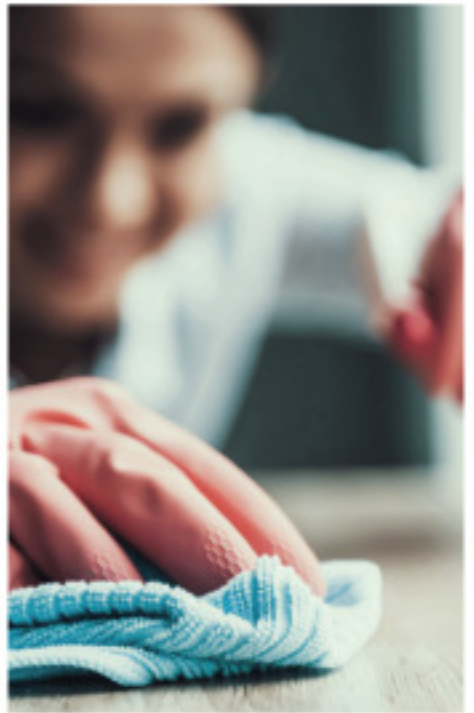
Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, we strongly recommend against attending any social gatherings and travelling if it is not essential. Attending even small gatherings increases the risk of exposure to COVID-19, which increases the chance of infection and spread to your community or neighbourhood.

## Face Masks

Wearing a face mask if you are sick will help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 to other people. A mask will help keep a person's droplets in. Face masks can also provide some protection to others around you when physical distancing is difficult to maintain i.e., in grocery stores or on public transit.

## Cleaning

The COVID-19 virus can survive on porous surfaces such as skin and cloth as well as other materials and surfaces for hours to days, depending on the surface. Regular household cleaners are effective at removing germs. You may also use a solution of one part bleach mixed with nine parts water to disinfect areas that are touched often such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables.



## School Calendar 2020-2021

The BC Government announced that all students will return to in-class instruction starting in September. First Nations governments are best positioned to determine what approach works best for their communities and have jurisdiction to decide what approach to take for the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School. The safety and well-being of students, families and staff is our greatest priority.

After much consultation, including with the GNN Health and Family Services, school administration recommends that the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School follow similar provincial guidelines and welcome students and staff back into classrooms this fall to full in-class instruction. However, to best support our students and families we feel the best way to manage a safe return to school requires a transition period during the first 3-4 weeks of school. This will allow staff and students time to familiarize themselves with new protocols and safety measures.

### Grades 1-7 transition period details:

<b>Monday, September 7</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 8</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 9</b>	<b>Thursday, September 10</b>	<b>Friday, September 11</b>
Labour Day-No School	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation
<b>Monday, September 14</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 15</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 16</b>	<b>Thursday, September 17</b>	<b>Friday, September 18</b>
Group 1 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 1 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 12:00 pm	No Students
<b>Monday, September 21</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 22</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 23</b>	<b>Thursday, September 24</b>	<b>Friday, September 25</b>
Group 1 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 1 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	No Students
<b>Monday, September 28</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 29</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 30</b>	<b>Thursday, October 1</b>	<b>Friday, October 2</b>
Groups 1 & 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Groups 1 & 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Groups 1 & 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Groups 1 & 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	No Students
All students attending for full days				

*\*\*Group 1- 1/2 of the students in a class (do our best for family groupings)*

*\*\*Group 2- Other 1/2 of the students in class*



**Pre K and Kindergarten transition period details:**

<b>Monday, September 7</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 8</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 9</b>	<b>Thursday, September 10</b>	<b>Friday, September 11</b>
Labour Day-No School	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation	Parent/Student Orientation
<b>Monday, September 14</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 15</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 16</b>	<b>Thursday, September 17</b>	<b>Friday, September 18</b>
Group 1 8:55 - 10:30 am	Group 1 8:55 - 10:30 am	Group 2 8:55 - 10:30 am	Group 2 8:55 - 10:30 am	No Students
<b>Monday, September 21</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 22</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 23</b>	<b>Thursday, September 24</b>	<b>Friday, September 25</b>
Group 1 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 1 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 12:00 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 12:00 pm	No Students
<b>Monday, September 28</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 29</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 30</b>	<b>Thursday, October 1</b>	<b>Friday, October 2</b>
Group 1 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 1 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	Group 2 8:55 - 3:05 pm	No Students
All students attending for full days				

**\*\*Group 1-** 1/2 of the students in a class (do our best for family groupings)

**\*\*Group 2-** Other 1/2 of the students in class

On the advice of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), and similar to the public education system, we propose our students be organized into learning groups of 2 classes. This reduces the number of close, in-person interactions and supports a full return to in-class instruction for most students. A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school term, or year and who primarily interact with each other.

For example, learning groups would be made up of:

- Two classes that sometimes join together for additional learning activities

Learning groups can also include staff, like:

- Teachers
- Specialist support staff
- Education Assistants (EAs)

Learning groups provide a range of benefits for students including more in-class learning time, increased peer interaction and support, and decreased feelings of isolation .

***It's also important to note that parents of children with complex medical conditions or underlying risk factors should consult with their health care provider to determine their child's level of risk regarding return to school. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children with severe immune compromise, on a case-by-case basis.***

As the COVID-19 situation evolves we will continue to take direction from GNN Band Council, GNN Health and Family Services and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO). Staff and students may be required to move to different methods of providing education to the students of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School. These may include reducing the number of students in each class, the number of days students attend or suspend in-class instruction and move towards at-home learning.

**Option 2: In-Class Instruction Partially Resume (with additional health measures)**

The school will be open Monday to Thursday. Friday will be a day to deep clean the school by custodians. Students will come 2 days per week.

Monday and Wednesday - Group 1 in-class, Group 2 working at home

Tuesday and Thursday - Group 2 in-class, Group 1 working at home

\*Students of essential service workers and some vulnerable and high special education needs students will have the option to attend Monday to Thursday.

**Option 3: In-Class Instruction Suspended (at-home learning continues)**

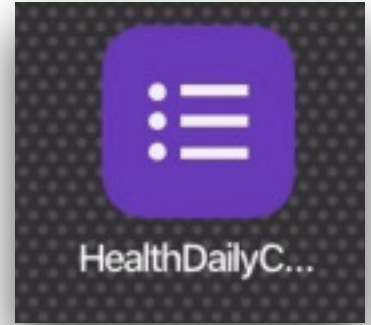
Students are not allowed in school building and are working remotely at home. This would be similar to what we currently were doing from March to June 2020.

## School Procedures and Preventative Measures

### Healthy Staff

In order to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our facilities the following procedures will be carried out on a daily basis for school staff:

- Before coming to work or entering the school building each day all employees must conduct a self-assessment electronically via google forms.



### Healthy Students

Parents/guardians are responsible to:

- Monitor your child daily for symptoms;
- Assessing their child's health before arriving to school;
- A *Daily Family Check In* will be available to our parents;
- Do not send your child to school if they are sick. **Anyone who is sick will not be allowed in school;**
- Encourage your child to minimize physical contact with their friends;
- All students will have hands sanitized prior to entering the school;
- If symptoms appear after arrival to school, students will be directed to a designated isolation area (health room) until a parent or guardian is able to pick them up.

### COVID-19 Like Symptoms

Students and staff with seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms related to pre-existing conditions don't need to stay home. If the allergy symptoms are the same as they usually are during this time of year (e.g. itchy eyes, runny nose) and can be relieved with antihistamine or allergy medication, then they do not need to stay home. If students or staff are unsure if the symptoms are related to allergies or a pre-existing condition, or if their usual symptoms worsen, they should stay at home.

(BC Centre for Disease Control)

## Daily Family Check In

### Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School - Daily Family Check In

Parents are a child's first teacher; please take with your child(ren) about how to protect themselves and others from getting sick. The information in below can assist you with preventative measures instructions. Parents are responsible for assessing their child's health before arriving at school. The checklist below will help you ensure everyone arrives symptom free!

#### Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing **cover mouth and nose** with flexed elbow or tissue 

 **Throw tissue into closed bin immediately after use**

**Clean hands** with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick 

 World Health Organization

#### Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and running water when **hands are visibly dirty** 

If your **hands are not visibly dirty**, frequently clean them by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water 

 World Health Organization

Student Name (s):	Date:
Do you have a new cough?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Do you have a fever?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Is your head, chest or nose feeling full?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Are you sneezing?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Do you have a runny nose or dripping down your throat?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Is there anyone sick at home?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
Are you having a hard time breathing?	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>

Should children, youth and staff have common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms they must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19. When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider. (Ministry of Education K-12 COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines May 2020)

### **Arriving, Entering and Leaving the Building**

- All staff must complete the Daily Health Check before entering the building;
- We ask that children do not arrive too early in the morning to avoid mingling amongst learning groups. Late arrivals enter at the front door.
- Students will be expected to line up outside their designated entrances using the social distancing markings as guidelines;
- Morning duty workers will encourage proper social distancing with students prior to students entering the school (six feet/two meters apart, no touching, no hugging, no sharing of food or supplies, no congregating in common areas);
- All students will have their hands sanitized prior to entering the school;
- Prior to dismissal students will have their hands washed or sanitized;
- Classes will be escorted outside/inside for recess and lunch hour by Teacher or EA.
- After school students should be encouraged to leave the building and school grounds as quickly as possible and avoid congregating in common areas.

### **Visitors Entering the Building**

- Parents/guardians and visitors will be encouraged to make an appointment prior to arriving at the school;
- Parents/guardians and visitors upon entering the building must sign in, use hand sanitizer, complete a health check and wear a mask (this is so we can provide information to the public health office if they to follow up with contact tracing and to keep students and staff safe from people outside their learning or family groups).

### **Sickness at School: What should happen if students become sick at school?**

- Should a student begin to exhibit symptoms of COVID – 19 after arriving at school they will be immediately directed to a designated isolation area until parent/guardian pick-up can be arranged;
- The health room will be used for isolating a sick child as it has a sink with hot and cold running water and hand washing supplies, at minimum it will have hand sanitizer, a garbage can and tissues;



## Limit Access to Facilities

- Access to the school will be limited to staff and students only;
- Whenever possible interactions should take place via phone, email or on-line platform to limit the need for face to face interactions;
- Parents/guardians and visitors are encouraged to make an appointment prior to arriving at the school;
- Parents/guardians should remain outside their child's designated entrance/exit for drop off and dismissal in order to limit the number of people accessing the building while respecting social distancing;
- Parents/guardians and visitors upon entering the building must sign in, use hand sanitizer, complete a health check and wear a mask (this is so we can provide information to the public health office if they to follow up with contact tracing and to keep students and staff safe from people outside their learning or family groups);
- Directional signs will be used to keep traffic flowing in the hallways;



## Physical Distancing: What are cohort/learning groups?

- A cohort/learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school term to help limit physical contacts and help make COVID-19 contact tracing easier.
- Cohorts reduce the number of in-person, close interactions students and staff have while at school. They allow most students to receive in-person learning in a close-to-normal learning environment.

(BC Centre for Disease Control)

### Learning Cohorts:

- Grade 7 (Dianne) and Grade 6 (Allyson)
- Grade 4/5 (Jen H) and Grade 4/5 (Jenn H)
- Grade 2/3 (Jackie/ML) and Grade 2/3 (Michelle)
- Grade 1 (Erin), Kindergarten (Sheri-An) and Pre K (Robin)

## Physical Distancing: How do we practice physical distancing while at school?

- Staff and students in a cohort/learning group do not need to physically distance from each other, but minimizing physical contact is still encouraged;
- Staff and students should continue to practice physical distancing if they are interacting with people outside of their cohort/learning group or if they are not part of a cohort/learning group;
- Staying 2 metres apart is not always feasible and is not expected at all times in schools;
- Encourage children to avoid physical contact. This is more important than keeping 2 metres apart all the time;
- Unless they are a part of the same cohort/learning group, adults should still keep 2 metres apart from each other and wear a mask at all time when interacting with students. In instances where staff may not be able to keep a 2 metre distance from students due to diverse needs, they should focus on keeping as much distance as possible and minimizing physical contact.

(BC Centre for Disease Control)

## Increased Time Spend Time Outdoors

- Sports, exercise and other lessons will be encouraged to be outdoors when possible;



## Classrooms

- Classrooms will be decluttered with excess desks, chairs, equipment or toys reduced to provide a “minimalist” type environment.
- Items in each classroom will be easy to clean – hard surfaced items, avoiding stuffed animals and soft furnishings (couches, bean bag chairs, dress up clothes, pillows, etc.);
- Only essential daily required teaching materials should be in each room;
- Students must take home all personal items on a daily basis;
- At the end of the day any toys used by students will be placed in a sealed tote for terminal disinfecting by custodian.

## High Traffic Areas

- Staff **will be required** to wear a mask in high traffic areas. These include the office/reception area, photocopier area, and staff room.



## Hand Hygiene

- Hand sanitizing stations will be at all entry/exit points of our school, in every classroom and offices;
- Increased signage at all sinks the building detailing COVID hand washing procedures;



## Personal Protective Equipment

- Students are **not required** to wear masks at school;
- PPE including masks for students will be provided by the school if requested.



## Improvements to Ventilation Systems

- Classrooms and offices will keep windows and doors open during occupancy to ensure fresh air and ventilation;
- Improved HVAC filtration has been installed in the school's ventilation system.

## Recess and Lunch/Playgrounds

- Recess and lunch times will be staggered to minimize contact between students;
- Playgrounds are a safe environment for students to play together. Duty workers will focus more on minimizing physical contact between each other rather than staying 2 metres apart;
- No cleaning or disinfection is required for playground structures;
- All students will practice hand hygiene before and after play.
- Recess Schedule:
  - Recess (10:30-10:45): Primary (Pre K, K and Grade 1), Intermediate (Grades 4 and 5)
  - Recess (10:45-11:00): Primary (Grades 2 and 3), Intermediate (Grade 6 and 7)
- Lunch Schedule:
  - Lunch (12:00 - 12:30):
    - Inside: Primary (Pre K, K and Grade 1), Intermediate (Grades 6 and 7)
    - Outside: Primary (Grades 2 and 3), Intermediate (Grades 4 and 5)
  - Lunch (12:30 - 1:00):
    - Inside: Primary (Grades 2 and 3), Intermediate (Grades 4 and 5)
    - Outside: Primary (Pre K, K and Grade 1), Intermediate (Grades 6 and 7)





## Close Personal Care

- All staff and students must endeavour to maintain social distancing at all times. Where close personal care is required (including the provision of First Aid) staff will wear a mask and gloves and will dispose of them directly into the garbage immediately after use. Wash hands immediately after removing mask and gloves and before leaving the room.



## Washrooms

- Students are required to use the washrooms in their classrooms. Staff will remind students to wash hands for 20 seconds after using washrooms;
- Gym bathrooms will be modified to only allow one occupant at a time. Students should only be using the gym bathroom during their designated gym time.



## Cleaning

- A custodian will rotate through the school on an ongoing basis ensuring all touch points (door handles, countertops, faucets, etc) are disinfected minimally twice daily and that supplies are topped up as needed;
- Evening custodians will perform regular cleaning duties. This includes items that only a single student uses, like individual desks;
- Each classroom will be provided with a spray bottle of disinfectant solution and cloths for staff to disinfect high touch points throughout the day as needed;
- 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 because of COVID-19.

## Riding the Bus

The [BCCDC public health guidelines for schools](#) include the following recommendations for student transportation on school buses:

- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with BCCDC guidelines;
- Buses will be loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back with assigned seating;
- Masks are not recommended for elementary students on school buses due to the increased likelihood of touching their face and eyes, especially when putting them on, adjusting them and taking them off;
- The bus driver will wear a mask;



## **School Meal Programs: Breakfast Club and Snack Program**

- Existing meal programs will continue to work with community partners to provide meal support to families in need, in alignment with current public health guidelines;
- Breakfast Club will remain at the Wakas Hall with more tables so social distancing can be accomplished;
- Students will be seated by classroom groupings;
- Breakfast Club tables will be disinfected between students;
- Breakfast will be served by staff members wearing masks and using gloves;
- Snack program will provide snacks that are individually packaged;
- Backpack Buddies Program will still be available to our families.

