

# Office of the Superintendent

*Shelley Green - Superintendent*

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

## **Follow Up Re: Optional K-12 In-class Instruction Set to Begin June 1**

As you know, last Friday BC's Restart Plan was announced and K-12 students will have the option of scheduled in-class instruction beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>. Parents were advised that they could choose to send their child to school within the part-time rotational framework or continue learning from home. We realize this is a difficult decision for our families and you have numerous questions about health and safety, procedures, schedules and processes. This letter will provide some clarity around next steps and updated protocols that will be expected as we move forward.

### **Essential Service Workers (ESW):**

Two weeks ago, we re-opened the ESW survey for families who would be returning to work. We received a strong response from our communities and have moved students into their home schools for care and instruction this week. The survey remains open and if you are returning to work and require this support, please fill out the survey so we can plan for your child(ren) accordingly. The survey is available through your school.

### **Students who are requiring additional supports:**

During the time of COVID-19 our staff has continued to reach out to families and students to see how they are doing. Individual planning and supports for these students will continue until the end of the school year.

### **Kindergarten to Grade 5 Optional in-class instruction:**

Your school will be sending out a survey to see if you are choosing to have your children return for the rotational in-class instruction beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>. Once schools know how many students are returning they will be able to plan and schedule students in order to provide face to face instruction approximately two days per week while following the Health and Safety guidelines.

### **Grades 6 – 12 Optional in-class instruction:**

Your school will be sending out a survey to see if you are choosing to have your child return for rotational in-class instruction beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>. Once schools know how many students are

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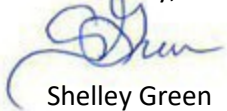
returning they will be able to plan and schedule students in order to provide face to face instruction for up to 20% of in-school learning per week while following the Health and Safety guidelines.

**It is important to note the following while considering optional in-class instruction:**

- It will not look the same as it did prior to spring break. Teachers/staff, classrooms, movement within the school and even classmates may look different for June. We have spent a lot of time following the guidelines from the Ministry of Health and the routines in our schools will reflect these guidelines. As we move forward staff, students, parents and community will have to learn the new routines and expectations so that everyone can remain safe.
- If you are experiencing any signs of illness you must stay home. All staff and students must assess themselves or be assessed by their parent daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza or COVID-19. If concerned they should contact 8-1-1 or the local public health office to seek further input. If students or staff become sick at school they will be sent home.
- School based control measures will be followed:
  1. **Stay Home When Sick** – *All children and staff with common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory diseases must stay home and self-isolate.*
  2. **Hand Hygiene** – *Everyone should wash their hands more often! Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce spread of the illness.*
  3. **Respiratory and Personal Hygiene** – *Cover your coughs. Do not touch your face. No sharing of food, drinks, or personal items.*
  4. **Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact** – *Spread children out to different areas. Take them outside more often. Stagger lunch times. Incorporate individual activities.*
  5. **Cleaning and Disinfecting** – *Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice a day. General cleaning of the centre should occur at least once a day. Use common cleaning and disinfectant products.*

As mentioned in the Ministry announcement on May 15<sup>th</sup>, we truly hope we can return to classes full time in September. However, we do know that COVID-19 will still be with us so the work we do today will help us with how we return in September and possibly make learning adjustments throughout the fall. Please send any feedback you may have to [community@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:community@sd61.bc.ca). All feedback will be greatly appreciated as we anticipate that there could be another shift in providing instruction in the next school year. As Dr. Henry continues to say “This is not forever but it is for now.” We need to work and plan together and every voice is important.

Sincerely,



Shelley Green  
Superintendent of Schools

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## Essential Service Worker Care in Greater Victoria Schools

### ***What does essential service worker care look like in the Greater Victoria School District?***

Our school district continues to be adaptable during these unprecedented times. We understand that we have an integral role in our community and continue to look for ways we can support our essential service workers as they continue to protect us, maintain essential services, and restart the economy. Over the past six weeks, we have successfully kept 15 schools open to serve the children of essential service workers. We are now preparing to welcome more students into our schools.

The school district started offering care at schools in April, prioritizing tier one essential service workers. Starting May 19th, all of our elementary and middle schools will be offering care services to accommodate the needs of various essential service workers' children.

### ***What is school care? When is it offered?***

We are offering care along with instruction to children of essential service workers (ESW) in our school classrooms for children from 5 -12 years of age.

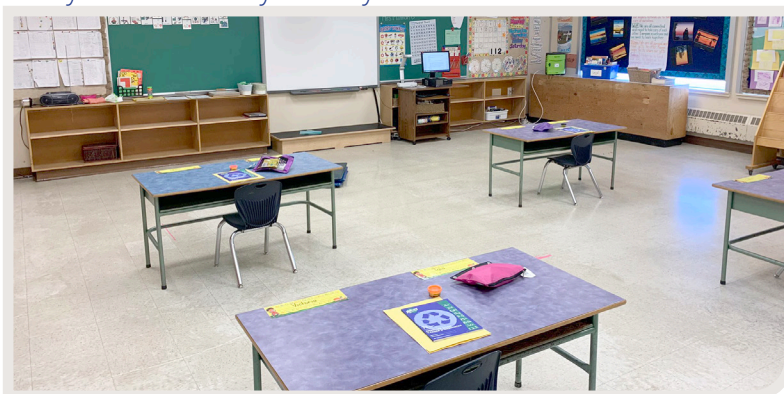
While we are offering care outside of the school day for the next few weeks, SD61 ESW care will be limited to the regular school hours that are in alignment with bell schedules, once other before and after school programs resume. We anticipate more childcare providers will be available for before and after school care starting June 1st, as part of BC's Restart Plan.

It is important to note that school care needs to be scheduled for safety. Schools cannot accommodate drop-ins. Weekends, Professional Development Days and statutory holidays are not included.

### ***What does school care look like?***

The health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority.

Children are assigned to a classroom or learning space that is set up to follow the latest safety protocols from our public health officials.





# Essential Service Worker *Care Snapshot*



During school care students work on instructional activities that have been assigned by the teachers and complete individualized projects including arts and crafts, creative writing, or math and science activities, such as seed planting.

Students also engage in outdoor activities like nature walks.

## **How do we know it's safe?**

Following the guidelines of our Public Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), if a staff member or child feels sick we require them to stay home. In addition, we have implemented strict protocols relative to hand washing, distancing between adults, and sneezing and coughing etiquette. Educational Assistants and Teachers are following our school site procedures to ensure they are minimizing the possibility of infection and illness.

Custodians are also following the BCCDC and Ministry of Education guidelines for cleaning protocols.

## **How do families register?**

The District issued a survey to staff and parents/guardians to determine families need for care. Schools will be connecting with families who indicated they require care.

If you require care and did not participate in the survey, please contact your school Principal. They will be able to provide you with a registration form. A registration form is required for each child attending. Upon confirmation that a child is enrolled, the school Principal will provide instruction for the first day (what entrance to use, where to sign-in, etc.).

The number of students in a learning space is limited, and determined by the space available, e.g., square footage per student to ensure safe distancing.

Educational Assistants and Teachers facilitate the care. Programming varies from school to school, however, all schools are following **Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings** and **WorkSafe BC's safety measures**.



# Essential Service Worker *Care Snapshot*

## ***Are meals provided for children?***

Children are required to bring their own food (lunch and snacks, water bottle, utensils). No food is provided. All food garbage will be pack in / pack out. Children must put their wrappers, juice boxes etc. back in their lunch boxes to go back home for recycling. Custodians are focusing on cleaning protocols and not waste management.

To create a comfortable environment for students, families are also invited to bring a blanket or pillow, if they wish. Students are welcome to bring their own devices to support their learning.

## ***What if I need care but am not part of your school district?***

Care is being offered in all school districts beginning May 19th. We advise you contact your child's home school district first, before requesting care from SD61.

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**We're excited to expand ESW care to benefit children's learning and do our part to re-open BC.  
We hope to see you soon!**

