

Friday, October 1, 2021

**Re: Enhanced Health and Safety Guidelines – Mask Update**

Dear Families,

Under the direction of the office of the Provincial Health Officer, mask guidelines for students are being enhanced. Effective, **Monday, October 4, 2021**, students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be required to wear masks.

This builds on the current guidelines that apply to all students in Grades 4 to 12. **All students in K-12 will now be required to wear non-medical masks in schools, including at their desks and on school buses.**

The extension of masking requirements is to support safe in-person learning environments. This additional layer of protection will help reduce the transmission of respiratory illnesses in our schools.

We know that school is the best place for children to learn and that schools support children's social and emotional well-being. Therefore, we must continue to do our part in keeping our schools safe.

We also know the most important thing we can do to protect children is to make sure the adults around them are vaccinated. We strongly encourage all those who are eligible to get fully vaccinated to do so. In addition, we ask that everyone continues with daily health checks, and to stay at home if they are not feeling well.

We understand there are mask exemptions, just as there were with the previous guidelines. Please be mindful there may be some who have exemptions and accommodations. We ask that you continue to foster a positive mask-wearing environment and promote respectful conversations about mask requirements.

For more details on the expanded safety measures, contact tracing, etc., please see resources below.

Sincerely,



Deb Whitten  
Interim Superintendent of Schools

**Additional Resources:**

[Media Release – Expanded health, safety measures for K-12](#)

[BCCDC Infographic - How does contact tracing work?](#)

[BCCDC Backgrounder – Contact Tracing in Schools](#)

[BCCDC Website – K-12 Schools and COVID-19](#)

[K-12 Daily Health Check App](#)

*The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*