



Office of the Superintendent

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road, Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8
Phone (250) 475-4162 Fax (250) 475-4112

Deb Whitten – Interim Superintendent

Thursday, December 30, 2021

RE: Delayed return to the classroom to support safe in-person learning

Dear staff/families,

In response to the Omicron variant, schools across the province will be delaying the return from winter break to allow school districts to implement enhanced safety measures. Schools will be taking a sequenced approach with all staff returning on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, to reinforce health and safety measures ahead of students returning to the classroom.

All K-12 students will return to in-person learning on Monday, January 10, 2022. Students with disabilities, exceptional needs or whose parents work in the health care system are able to return on Tuesday, January 4, 2022. Please connect with your Principal via email as soon as possible if you are planning to send your child to school on January 4.

The District will be fortifying existing safety measures, including:

- Maximizing space between people; avoiding face to face seating where possible
- Implementing strategies to avoid crowding during class transitions
- Holding all school gatherings and events virtually*
- Holding all staff meetings virtually
- Limiting school visitors to those who are supporting activities that directly benefit student learning and well-being (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.)
- Pausing extracurricular sports tournaments

*If school gatherings are required to be in-person, the number of people will be limited to no more than 50% operating capacity.

The District will be updating its [Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](#) to reflect these additional measures. As prior to the winter break, the District will continue with increased cleaning and disinfecting while ensuring all staff, students and visitors wear a mask indoors. Only those with a mask exemption will be permitted to not wear a mask.

As the battle with COVID-19 continues, and the Omicron variant presents different challenges we would like to remind all staff, students and families about the importance of continuing with the daily health

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.

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checks and staying home when they are sick. We strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to get fully vaccinated to do so.

For more information about COVID-19 school safety plans:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools>

In the meantime, please stay safe. We look forward to a safe return for all staff and students.

Sincerely,



Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent

Additional Resources:

To learn more about COVID-19 vaccines for children:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/children>

To see the addendum to the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf>

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