



School District 22 – Superintendent of Schools UPDATE – January 9, 2022

Welcome all School District 22 K-12 students! Welcome to 2022!

Dear families,

School District 22 would like to extend a huge thank you for your support during the previous week. As you know, the delayed return was supported by an Order from the Provincial Health Officer, which applied to all public and independent schools in British Columbia. The time allowed our school-based staff and transportation team to collaborate, learn about the challenges the new Omicron variant may bring – including the likelihood of *functional school closures*, *transportation closures*, or *public health closures* (more on this highlighted later in the letter), implement enhanced safety measures, and proactively ensure the continuity of learning plans. We acknowledge this is all extremely challenging for our families, staff, and students. We have each other and we are a great learning community. We remain SD22 strong.

To ensure that continuity of learning, schools will be reminding all students, staff, and families about existing safety measures, including:

- Using all available space to maximize space between people:
 - For example, different common space, classroom and learning environment configurations (e.g., avoid face-to-face seating arrangements where possible).
- Everyone able to wear a mask.
- Doing daily health checks <https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1> and staying home when sick.
- Implementing strategies that prevent crowding during class transition times.
- Holding school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, etc.) virtually. If they must be in-person, limit the number of people to no more than 50% operating capacity.
- Holding staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development activities) virtually whenever possible.
- Limiting 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 and no spectators for indoor events.

The guidelines build on **existing protocols that have succeeded in minimizing the spread of the virus** in schools, such as:

- Encouraging everyone who is eligible to get fully vaccinated.
- Using available space to spread out and to respect personal space.
- Wearing masks in accordance with Provincial Health Officer Order on Face Coverings: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-face-coverings.pdf>
- Washing hands regularly.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces at least once a day. Our district also has enhanced cleaners.

For more on our School District updates, please see the link to our updated (as of January 2022)

Health & Safety Video: [https://sd22org-](https://sd22org-my.sharepoint.com/personal/district_it_department_sd22_bc_ca/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo%2FJan%202022%20SD22%20Safety%20Orientation%20Video%2Emp4&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo)

[my.sharepoint.com/personal/district_it_department_sd22_bc_ca/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo%2FJan%202022%20SD22%20Safety%20Orientation%20Video%2Emp4&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo](https://sd22org-my.sharepoint.com/personal/district_it_department_sd22_bc_ca/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo%2FJan%202022%20SD22%20Safety%20Orientation%20Video%2Emp4&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fdistrict%5Fit%5Fdepartment%5Fsd22%5Fbc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FA%5FWebpage%5FContent%2FSafety%5FOrientation%5FVideo)

Where do I find the District's updated Communicable Disease Plan for January 2022?

Under the COVID tab on the far right of our website. We will put as much information as possible directly on our website <https://sd22.bc.ca>.

<https://sd22.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/January-3-2022-Communicable-Disease-Plan.pdf>

Types of School Closures:

Functional School Closure: A functional closure of a school is a temporary closure determined by a school district or independent school due to a lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial to ensure the health and safety of students. This would likely be due to a high number of staff or certain employees away who are required for a school to function, and the inability to temporarily replace them. This will be a collaborative decision by the school and district and may include IHA. Notification will come directly from your school.

o Functional School Closure process:

- **Day 0** - We will do our best to communicate with you the afternoon prior to a Functional Closure. Please note that staffing challenges may not arise until after the day has begun. If changes occur during the school day, families will be notified to pick up their children or provide permission for them to leave school. Students who are unable to be picked up or transported home will be supervised by available staff until the end of the instructional day.
- **Day 1** – Families can expect to be contacted by their teachers(s) about the pivot to remote learning.

- **From Day 2 onward**, instruction will be remote. It is fully expected that after a week (Day 7), students will return to class, however, we must all remain flexible. **We will call families back to face-to-face instruction as soon as it is safe to do so.**
- Last week, our Principals/Vice-Principals/Teachers/EAs/ISWs prepared for four types of learning:
 - As normal;
 - For a Teacher Teaching on-Call (TTOC);
 - For the collapse of several classes being put together; and
 - For a pivot to remote learning during a Functional School Closure.

We acknowledge the hard work at the school-level in order to make this happen.

Transportation Closure: A transportation closure is a lack of staff able to provide the required level of transportation services for students. This would likely be due to bus drivers and/or mechanics being away and the inability to replace those absences. This will be determined early in the morning at the District level.

Public Health Closure: A public health closure is the temporary closing of a school by order of a Medical Health Officer and/or Interior Health when they determine it is necessary to prevent the excessive transmission of a communicable disease (e.g., COVID-19). This will be determined by IHA.

Will there still be contact tracing and notifications if there are exposures?

No. This is not sustainable. The situation is no longer the same. Many more people will get the new variant. Omicron has a short incubation stage, transmission is faster, and there will be more self-testing. The good news is that most people are now protected from serious illness through vaccination.

Will we have Rapid Antigen Tests?

“As the Province awaits new rapid tests shipments from the federal government, B.C.’s existing supply of rapid tests will continue to be used at schools where there has been exposure events and outbreaks. When new federal shipments of take-home rapid tests arrive in mid-January, their use will be scaled up with 500,000 tests deployed as needed to support the safe continuation of in-person learning.

Transmission in B.C. schools reflects transmission in the community and schools with consistently implemented prevention measures have proven to be lower risk throughout the pandemic. The government is committed to continuing to support safe in-person education in recognition of its positive impact on the intellectual, social and emotional development of students. Schools also provide important supports for children, such as meal programs and mental-health supports.” (news.gov.bc.ca)

Communication:

We will keep communicating as best we can. Please understand, as throughout the pandemic, that some things may change daily:

School-level communication: Your school principal and/or child’s teacher will continue to share school-specific operational and educational information and resources. This will include notice of a Functional Closure , if needed.

District-level communication: You will continue to receive communications from me, and on our website, including information regarding emergent issues, regularly scheduled Superintendent's Reports, and at Board meetings (via Zoom).

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>

In closing, the health, safety and well-being of students and staff are a top priority for all of us in School District 22.

Thank you all for your ongoing trust, support, and patience. I also ask that we continue to treat each other with kindness, compassion, and grace. We are all doing our best.

If you have specific questions about this update, please contact your child's school, and your Principal, directly.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Dr. Christine Perkins | Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer

Proud to live, work, learn, and play on the ancestral, unceded territory of the syilx nation.

(she, her, hers)

School District No. 22 (Vernon)

1401 - 15th Street, Vernon, B.C. V1T 8S8

Office: 250-549-9217

Cell: 250-308-8191

Email: cperkins@sd22.bc.ca

Web: www.sd22.bc.ca