



September 18, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Re: [COVID-19 Information Bulletin](#)

We made it through our first full week of in-class instruction. We hope students had a positive start to the school year despite the poor air quality – as if managing our way through a pandemic is not enough! I was fortunate to visit a few schools (with a mask on and maintaining physical distance) to see learning in action, and I will admit it felt good. I was very impressed by our students and staff all working to follow health and safety guidelines and learning together in this new normal. I was also delighted to see students smiling and hearing laughter inside classrooms. It was a great reminder of why we are in education; we care about students!

[Thank You Families](#)

Thank you for your trust, patience, and cooperation. It is evident our students, staff and families are all working together to ensure we continue to meet health and safety guidelines. We realize the situation is not perfect, but we are always striving to improve. We could not have had such a successful week without your support.

[Update on Enrolment Numbers](#)

We have had a majority of our students return to in-class learning. Below is a breakdown of student enrolment from this past week:

- 91 per cent enrolled in In-class Instruction
- 5 per cent enrolled in the Transition Support Model
- 3 per cent enrolled in Distributed Learning
- 1 per cent enrolled in Homeschooling

[Transition Support Model](#)

We know that there continues to be some anxiety in our community. We are committed to working with families on providing educational opportunities to meet their needs during this challenging time. Our District will begin delivering education through the Transition Support Model on **Monday, September 21**. The District will be communicating plans directly to these families to help them get prepared prior to Monday.

All in-school learning opportunities will be initiated through the home learning team (parent/guardian and student). It is not the intention that students must access in-school supports initially. Face-to-face support/connection experiences will be scheduled through the transition support model teacher.

Our intention is for all students in the Transition Support Model (TSM) to return to their enrolled school in January. District and school staff will make every effort to have your child placed in their enrolled school. Our commitment will be to update TSM families by November 30 on what they can expect in January.

Distributed Learning at U-Connect

Our staff are continuing to explore potential options for families who feel the Transition Support Model is not right for them. Those families who have expressed interest in a distributed learning option can expect communication from their schools next week. We are pleased to report that we are expanding the Kindergarten to Grade 7 blended program and developed a new full-time online learning program for students in Grades 1-9.

Preparing for a Case of COVID-19 in our Schools

As you have likely heard, there are confirmed COVID-19 cases linked to schools in other districts in Metro Vancouver. We anticipate you may have questions and concerns. We are learning lessons from our colleagues and are working diligently to be prepared in the event of a COVID-19 case in one of our schools. We continue to take direction from the Ministry of Education and Provincial Health Office when it comes to the management of illness and confirmed cases.

Current protocol following a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our school community is as follows:

- Fraser Health Authority will interview the impacted individual to initiate the contact tracing process.
- Fraser Health will determine how the individual was infected and who they were in close contact with.
- Fraser Health will determine what steps close contacts should take. This may include self-isolating or self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days.
- Only Fraser Health can determine who is a close contact.
- Our District and Fraser Health will work together on a communications plan to let staff, students and their families know when there is confirmed case at the school and if it impacts them.

Our District will work closely with Fraser Health to determine if there is any risk to other members of our school community, and if any additional steps are required. We will follow the health authority's guidance.

The key point for families to remember is that Fraser Health will connect directly with any individuals who may have been exposed with further instructions via phone call or letter. If you are contacted by Fraser Health, please follow their advice carefully.

Fraser Health has produced a set of Frequently Asked Questions related to COVID-19 and schools in video format which can be found [here](#). Our health authority has also launched a new website to track COVID-19 exposures in schools to help keep you informed. You can view it [here](#).

Daily Health Check

Health and safety continue to be our top priority. Thank you for signing and returning the original health check form to your school. We also appreciate families completing the daily health check at home with your child before they get to school. This is the first line of defense to help keep everyone in our community healthy and safe.

Schools have sent home a [revised daily health check form](#). This new version does not have to be signed and returned to the school. We need your cooperation in conducting the assessment daily with your child using the revised questions on this form. It is important to note, we are following the guidance of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. These agencies continue to [update guidelines](#), including this form. This amendment is an example of how we all should be flexible and ready for any changes in our protocols and measures.

Transportation

Our District has worked hard over the last year to make improvements in our transportation registration process and communications. This year we have approximately 650 eligible riders in our system. Our staff are continuing to prioritize eligible riders and find placements for courtesy riders. This has been a challenging school start-up for the department due to changes in scheduling and the implementation of COVID-19 health and safety guidelines related to transportation. Registration for the 2020-2021 school year is now closed, other than for those families new to the community residing outside the walk limits. For those families waiting to hear information about their status, we ask for your patience. We are doing our best to provide as many spaces as possible with our resources.

StrongStart

September is a stressful but also exciting time for all our students. It is also a time for new beginnings for our pre-K children. Our District is focusing on closing the gaps and ensuring we provide robust early learning programming amidst a pandemic. StrongStart will begin on Monday, September 28 with a new registration system, a reduced number of participants, and strict health and safety guidelines. You will be able to find information about the program on our webpage [here](#) next week.

It has been a busy and challenging week for everyone adjusting to all the changes. Thank you again for all your support. We are committed to providing a safe and rewarding learning experience for all of our students.

Sincerely,



Gord Stewart
Superintendent of Schools