



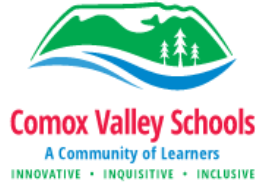
Comox Valley Schools

A Community of Learners

INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE

Return to School Plan

September 2020



School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Board of Education of School District No. 71

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Office of the Superintendent of Schools

August 26, 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a new school year. As we prepare for the 2020-2021 school year, we would like to extend a huge thank you to our custodial and maintenance department who, in our current environment, have been hard at work preparing our schools for the start of a new school year. We want to assure everyone that our schools are safe, welcoming, and ready for students.

On our website we refer you to the Return to School 2020 Banner where you will find a general explanation of our elementary and secondary return to school plans. We encourage you to review these and we ask you to visit your student's school for specific details as they pertain to that site. All schools restart plans will be posted on their website.

Our plan was developed following direction from the Ministry of Education and the guidelines developed by the Provincial Health Officer in close consultation with Island Health Authority and our educational partners.

While the majority of students will attend school and have face to face instruction some families may opt for home schooling or distance learning alternatives. At the Board Meeting on August 20, the Board of Education passed a resolution that if families opt for an alternative delivery model of education, DL or home schooling, that the students current spot be held at the school until September 2021-2022 school year. This will guarantee a place for the student to return for the next school year.

We would ask that if families are considering an alternative option to face to face learning, that they please connect with their current school principal to discuss their specific concerns. Families that choose an alternative delivery model and then decide to return their child to school may do so in consultation with the school principal at any point in the year.

Many additional questions have been compiled and prepared in a Frequently Ask Questions (FAQs) document that can be found on our website on a dedicated page, [Return to School 2020](#). These FAQs will continue to be updated as new information becomes available.

This web page is also populated with relevant and current information that has been provided by the BC government which has directed us in the development of our District specific plan, including [Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent Schools](#), the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#), Comox Valley Schools [Health and Safety Reoccupancy Requirements and Protocols](#), and [WorkSafeBC education protocols](#).

Please take the time to review the plan and the supporting resource materials to make an informed decision on your child's education and contact your school principal if you are considering opting for homeschooling or DL.

We look forward to seeing everyone in our schools. Enjoy the rest of your summer break.

Respectfully,

Tom Demeo
Superintendent of Schools

Elementary Learning Groups or Cohorts

Health and Safety:

- All schools have set up meetings with their health and safety committees to review the plans and ensure signage is properly placed in the school.
- Protocols have been established for staff that work with multiple cohorts of children (ie; music teacher, teacher librarian, counsellor)...for example in music class the students will each use sanitizer before they enter the music room and again when they leave the room.

Student entering and exiting the school:

- All schools have protocols around students entering and exiting the building (for example; exterior classroom doors and multiple entrances will be used with classes assigned to a specific entrance. Staff will meet students at the designated spot and bring them into the school on a staggered basis).

Learning Groups or Cohorts:

- Learning groups or cohorts have been organized by age rather than the traditional “buddy class” (where a grade 7 class would partner with a k class) as the cohort is the group that will work together on projects, play together and interact....we are trying to keep our numbers well below 60. Schools have designed their cohorts based on putting 2 divisions together.
- Cohorts will play in the same designated play area on the playground at recess and lunch. Schools have organized their schools into zones and the zones will rotate daily/weekly so students have access to multiple play areas.
- Sports Teams – students can play sports within their cohorts only.
- Recess and lunch breaks – some of the larger schools have to stagger recess – (for example if there are 20 divisions – 10 would go out at a time.....lunch breakschools are working with teachers to supervise the eating part of the break and EAs and admin will supervise the play part).
- Inclement weather will have an impact on school plans and students will be encouraged to dress appropriately for wet and cold weather.

- Parents – we are limiting the number of adults in a building or on a playground as we do not want to compromise the cohorts. Parents can always contact the principal and arrange a meeting if needed. Lots of parents use the school to help their children set up playdates and network with other families. Plans are currently being developed to have a k/parent with masks site for drop off and pick up as we know that this is the first contact many families have with the school system and we want to make it as positive as possible.

Secondary Restart Plan

Block System: Copernican Model/Quarter System

- 120 students and staff per learning cohort (maximum)
- 2 Blocks per day for 10 weeks (approx. 2 ½ hours each)
- AM Block and a PM Block
- AM or PM Block may be split into two courses within the same cohort or two courses with social distancing
- Grade 8-10 will stay in the same cohort
- Grade 11-12 will stay in their cohorts for AM and practice Social Distancing in their PM classes (to allow for students to take courses needed to fulfill grad requirements)

Sample Weekly Schedules:

Based on the following premise:

- Maintain Health & Safety of staff and students
- Student choice from March will be honored as much as possible
- Staff assignments from June remain the same as much as possible

Grade 8-10

- All movement occurs within the same cohort
- all classes are face to face

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:10-11:55	Block A Science 8	Block B French 8 ----- PE 8 (same cohort)	Block A	Block B	Block A
11:55-12:52	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:52-3:25	Block B French 8 ----- PE 8 (same cohort)	Block A Science 8	Block B	Block A	Block B

Please note: all times are tentative

Each secondary school may have a slightly different time table – please check their school websites for specific details.

Grade 11-12

- Cohort is established in A Block (ex: English 11)
- Social Distancing occurs in B Block (ex: Biology 11)
- 2 classes a day: face to face instruction
- Social distancing usually blends 2 or 3 cohorts

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:10-11:55	Block A <i>Cohort</i>	Block B <i>Social Distance</i>	Block A	Block B	Block A
11:55-12:52	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:52-3:25	Block B <i>Social Distance</i>	Block A <i>Cohort</i>	Block B	Block A	Block B

School Start up - First week back

- Individual lockers issued to students will be on hold
- Grade 8's come in on Thursday morning for a H&S orientation
- Grade 9's come in on Thursday afternoon for a H&S orientation
- Grade 10, 11, 12 come in Friday morning for a H&S orientation

Student with Diverse Abilities/Disabilities

- We will continue to utilize the processes that have been established district wide and are already in place in schools: Case Management; SBT—Referral/Review process; development of IEP/Learning Plans; assessment processes.
- Each student with diverse abilities/disabilities or designation will be assigned a Case manager or PVP/Counsellor contact.
- Classroom teachers, Case Managers and/or PVP/Counsellor contacts will connect with families to ensure that they are aware that their child/youth is welcome to attend school and to provide an update on their child/family.
- Case Managers/PVP/Counsellor contacts will bring students forward at SBT Review Meetings to review vulnerability, learning needs; EA supports, health and safety support and mental health support of all students in the cohort.
- The school district will ask schools to monitor school re-engagement levels of vulnerable students and families and will follow processes to connect with these families.
- Case Managers/PVP/Counsellor contacts will schedule IEP review meetings where goals will be reviewed and established in consultation with parents and school-based support team.
- The school district will provide a home support plan for those students who are immunocompromised according to the Ministry definition and cannot attend school.

- Nursing Support Services will provide Health Plans for those students needing them as well as training for EAs working with them.
- Public Health Nurses will be assigned to each school.
- Students with diverse abilities will be assigned to grade cohorts.
- School based counsellors will focus on the mental health and well-being of all students.
- A committee of counsellors will be formed to collect and share resources and design sessions for in class instruction regarding strategies for coping with anxiety.
- The district will continue to provide Pro D opportunities and resources centered around return to school: trauma informed practice, strategies for managing fears and anxiety, mask wearing and physical distancing as a result of COVID influences.
- Our community partners will continue to provide support to students on site, or by teleconferencing in the areas of anxiety, depression and substance abuse.
- Students enrolled in Secondary Programs (Life Skills, PREP) will be programed to meet their needs within the Copernican timetable and will be integrated into grade cohorts based on their needs.
- Itinerant (Specialist) teachers will adhere to protocols for teachers who teach in multiple cohorts. They will follow school entry procedures; they will remain physically distant and/or wear a mask or use school district lexan desk barriers when working one to one. Specialists can work at more than one school per day.
- Educational Assistants can support students from different cohorts. In that case they will adhere to the protocols for those who work in multiple cohorts. When working with students they will wear masks if they are not able to be physically distant.
- We have implemented additional protocols outlining the procedures for EAs who provide close personal care to students who require it.
- We will continue to update the Comox Valley COVID 19 Resource Guide to ensure families are aware of supports in the community as well as in the district.
- The school district website will continue to provide families with additional resources to support students at home to manage anxiety and uncertainty during this time.

Supporting Our Indigenous Students

In consultation with our Indigenous parents and Indigenous Education Council these themes emerged:

1. How will students have access to Indigenous Support Workers? How will the ISW work with Multiple cohorts in a school?

ISW's and their site Administrator will co-develop a COVID-19 ISW work schedule(s) effective Monday, September 21st, which will include:

- Regular contact with each student cohort (amount of scheduled time per cohort will mirror the number of Indigenous students in that cohort). “equal opportunity for contact with Indigenous students”
- Up to 1 hour per day (during day or after regular school hours if possible) set aside for accountability reports, emails, phone calls and other InEd tasks.
- Time set aside to support students being home schooled or enrolled at NIDES (amount of time reflects the number of Indigenous students who are choosing a different option).

Supporting students (SD71 approved schooling)

- Some parents / guardians may choose to have their students working from home.
- Students who are temporarily being home schooled or accessing their curriculum from NIDES (and have a plan approved by the School Administrator) will remain on the case load.
- Weekly contact with these students via Zoom, Teams, phone calls, home visits will be essential to maintain a connection between their school and home.

Use of School Based Indigenous Education rooms

- ISW's may use their assigned workspaces for hosting small groups of students from one cohort at a time only.
- If students come from different cohorts, the number of students visiting the InEd room at any time must reflect the ability to maintain 6-foot distance between staff and students (ie. The larger the room = more students in group).
- If physical distancing cannot be maintained, masks are recommended for ISW's.
- Each InEd room must have cleaning supplies available to clean areas used by students between scheduled student visits.

Masks Safety Protocol:

** InEd staff must wash hands prior to and after visiting each student cohort or having students visiting room.

** InEd staff must wear masks in common areas and where 6-foot distance is not able to be maintained

2. How will the District continue to bring and celebrate Indigenous Culture in our schools given we are limiting outside adults access to our Buildings?

- We will continue with our Elder in-Residence program. We will change the format from a face to face to using a zoom or Teams video conferencing platform. It is hoped that through this technology, more classes in a school will access the Elder for cultural and historical teachings and indigenous perspectives as they relate to our community.
- Encourage Elders to join classes on Field trips where social distancing can be practiced.
- Use our community knowledge keepers to share their stories and knowledge with the students. Our intent is to record these individuals telling stories and passing down their teaching to our students. The recordings can then be accessed District wide and become part of our collection for future use.

3. Nutritional programs – How will schools continue to feed students.

- Each school will develop a plan for their lunch programs, including making and distributing food. These plans will be sent to our Regional Health Officer who will advise and approve the plan in terms of meeting all Health and safety guidelines.
- Continue with our District Soup Program, following the same guidelines as above.
- Work in partnership with Lush Valley (community partner) to introduce a fruit and veggie based program for our schools.

Schools will continue to work with their respective communities to support all Indigenous learners.

Health and Safety

https://bit.ly/SD71_COVID19Protocols

Comox Valley Family COVID 19 Resource Guide link

https://bit.ly/SD71_COVID19ResourceGuide

Frequently Asked Questions

Current as of August 25, 2020

http://bit.ly/SD71_ReturntoSchoolFAQs