

School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Board of Education of School District No. 71

607 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, B.C. V9N 7G5
Fax (250) 334 5552
Telephone (250) 334 5500

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

February 4, 2021

Dear Staff and Families of SD71,

We would like to thank and commend all staff, students, and families for their teamwork and commitment to each other as we have lived and worked through this pandemic. Our combined efforts have ensured that our schools have remained safe throughout this past year.

Today, the Minister of Education and the Provincial Health Officer announced updated health and safety guidelines, which are to be implemented in all schools. As a result of our stringent and robust health and safety protocols these updated guidelines do not represent significant changes to our current operation.

Our enhanced guidelines will build upon our proven successful health and safety protocols. We want students, parents, guardians, and staff to continue to feel confident with our safety measures.

The main areas of enhancement to our current protocols are:

1. Masks

All middle and secondary students and K-12 staff will now be required to wear masks in all indoor areas, including when they are with their learning groups. The only exceptions are when:

- sitting or standing at their seat, desk or workstation in a classroom
- there is a barrier in place
- while eating or drinking and
- outdoors

2. Sports

Activities that include prolonged physical contact should not be a part of physical education or any other classroom learning. For example, activities like tag or touch football are lower risk, since students may only come into contact with each other briefly, whereas activities like wrestling or rugby are prohibited. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities wherever possible to reduce physical contact.

3. Music Programs

K-12 staff and middle and secondary students must wear masks when singing indoors. Music education should be delivered in line with the [Guidance for Music Classes in BC during COVID-19](#) document developed by the B.C. Music Educators' Assoc. and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C.

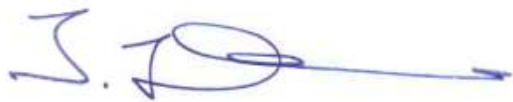
The District will update and provide schools with a COVID-19 health and safety checklist to ensure consistent implementation of the updated provincial guidelines. We are required to confirm every school has completed the checklist and have updated safety plans.

To support daily screening, a new K-12 health-checker app has been developed for students and their families and can be found at <https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca>.

We encourage you to visit the BC Centre for Disease Control's new website with information and resources about health and safety measures in K-12 schools at www.bccdc.ca/schools. Staff, families and students can find up-to-date information about K-12 schools at <https://www.gov.bc.ca/safeschools>.

For further information please visit our website at <https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/> .

Respectfully,



Tom Demeo
Superintendent of Schools



Paul Berry
Director of Instruction -
Health and Safety