

For immediate release

1 April 2021

Valley schools implement new mask protocols

COMOX VALLEY, B.C. – School district will implement new provincial health orders in all school settings effective April 6, upon return following the Spring Break period.

On Monday, March 29, the Provincial Health Officer announced new provincial health orders due to the recent rise in COVID-19 cases in B.C. As a result, the Ministry of Education has updated their [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#).

Effective Tuesday April 6th, the following changes will be in effect in all our schools.

Staff in all grades, adult volunteers, visitors and students in **Grades 4 to 12** are required to wear masks at all times inside and while riding a school bus. Masks must also be worn outside if physical distancing cannot be maintained. The guidance outlined above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:

- an individual is unable to wear a mask (for health or behavioural reasons);
- an individual is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- temporarily removed to identify the individual wearing it;
- temporarily removed to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask such as actively playing a wind instrument;
- while eating or drinking;
- behind a barrier;
- while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability, where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important.

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are encouraged to wear masks within the guidelines above but are not required to do so.

This guidance has been issued along with other extensive public health measures. Further notifications will be distributed from the school district if these guidelines should change. New guidance will be reflected in our [COVID-19 Occupancy Requirements and Protocols](#).

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Media Contact

Mary Lee
Manager of Communications
Comox Valley Schools (School District 71)
mary.lee@sd71.bc.ca